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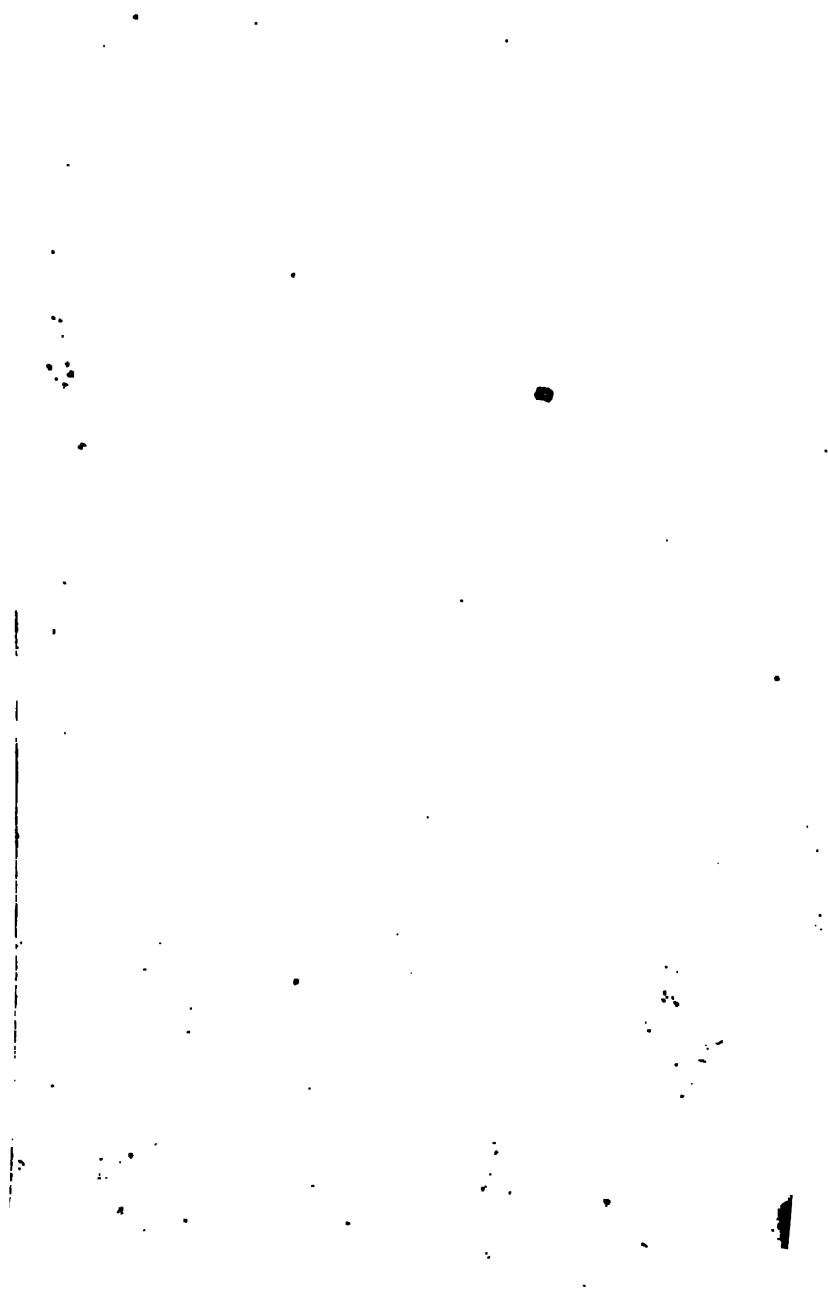
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PETERSBURG AND WARSAW:

SCENES WITNESSED
DURING A RESIDENCE IN POLAND AND RUSSIA
IN 1863-4

BY
AUGUSTIN P. O'BRIEN.



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PETERSBURG AND WARSAW.

CHAPTER I.

THE ENGLISH GOVERNMENT AND THE POLES.

AMONGST the discontented nationalities of Europe, none has excited more sympathy than Poland, though it must, at the same time, be confessed that none has received less active support. Without going back to the original partition of the country amongst the three great European Powers that now hold it; without referring to that anterior period when the seeds of dissension sown in the nature of the monarchy, were perpetually bringing forth their prickly produce; without pausing to discuss that dream of a revived Poland entertained by the Czar Alexander I., I shall content myself with speaking of the Poland of the

present day, and of how far she has been aided or injured by her sympathizers. If verbal sympathy could have healed the wounds or redressed the wrongs of Sarmatia, enough was said and written in England alone in the beginning of the present century to accomplish the work. But Poland's land-bound position, which cuts her off from any material aid that her insular sympathizers might be inclined to give her, prevents them in like manner from testing the truth of accounts they receive, and which are more frequently prepared in accordance with the preconceived notions of those by whom they are intended to be read, than with a regard to truth. This remark does not apply to gentlemen of the press, nor to English gentlemen travelling through Poland, who, touched by tales of oppression related to them, take up their pens, and, filled with virtuous indignation, make the English people acquainted with tales of horror, which the narrators firmly believe, but whose origin may be traced to the interested framers of such reports. And

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this spirit of exaggeration is a characteristic that distinguishes the late disturbances in Poland, from all previous outbursts of national feeling in that country. It is not that the Poles have become aliens to truth, or that they wish the rest of Europe to believe their position to be other than it is. On the contrary, great as is the sympathy felt for the Poles in England, I can confidently aver that they deserve still more commiseration than they excite. And the grounds for this commiseration are that they have been doubly deceived. They have been deceived by those foreign emissaries under whose influence this outburst of feeling has been excited; and they have been deceived by the hopes—well-grounded as they thought—of foreign aid.

If the true history of the late insurrection in Poland were thoroughly understood in England, public opinion would soon undergo a very great change. Not that sympathy for Poland would become less, but indignation would be directed against those who, to serve their own ends, trafficked in the patriotism of

the Poles, and caused a profitless expenditure of blood.

The spirit of anarchy unchained by the French Revolution, and so often mistaken for the spirit of freedom which at the same epoch rose from a long slumber, has since then numbered her worshippers and her martyrs by thousands throughout Europe. Anarchy so often assumes the garb and name, and takes the tone of freedom, that the blinded multitude to whom a well-cooked feast is offered, does not perceive that the voice of Jacob is combined with the hand of Esau. Freedom! Liberty! These, like many other of the best gifts accorded to man, have been trafficked in, and some of the noblest instincts from nature made instrumental to the darkest crimes.

These truths have been brought vividly before my eyes during my late residence in Warsaw. I went to that city filled with what I am inclined to call a hereditary English indignation against oppression, and I found—but I must confess it was long before I discovered the truth—that the Poles had been

misled; that their patriotic sentiments had been made a matter of traffic; that they had fallen into the hands of men, revolutionists by profession, who undertook to organize a revolution in Poland. The Poles discovered their mistake, but too late; they could not draw back, for the machinery of the National Government was by that time in full operation, and the *gendarmes pendeurs* were always ready for their work.

Nothing can be more unfortunate than the position of Poland. I would wish to speak loudly and energetically on the subject. The English people at this moment misjudge the conduct of their own government as much as they misunderstand the position of the Poles. A full and public discussion of the question would reveal truths as astonishing to the well-meaning English public as they were to me and to some few others who learned the facts on the scene of action.

The cosmopolitan revolutionists, whose headquarters are at London and Paris, having done a considerable share of work in Italy, and

having tickled a few of the minor nationalities of Europe, turned their eyes to Poland. Here they found materials ready to their use. With the Poles, patriotism is their strength and their weakness. There is no sacrifice that a patriot Pole is not ready to make for his country; there is no folly, no act of rashness, which he may not be induced to commit, if presented to him shadowed over with the veil of patriotism. The revolution-makers knew this, and found little difficulty in exciting fermentation in the elements present in Polish society; and the Poles, blinded by the vapours rising from their own quickly-heated imaginations, did not see, could not divine, the motives of their advisers. They were dazzled by the prospect of a thoroughly-organized revolution, ramifying itself into France and England, whence the roots should be supplied with nutriment. It was not to be wondered at, that many Polish noblemen and landowners were seduced; it was not to be wondered at, that old hopes, old visions, should again revive. These gentlemen believed that the

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emissaries of the revolutionists spoke the sentiments of England and France. The prospect was unfortunately too alluring. The Polish nobility, who are for the most part very rich, gave large sums of money freely, and the revolution-makers, thus supplied with what they most needed, set to work. These men understood perfectly well how to perform the task they had undertaken. The experience they had had in other countries, they utilized in Poland. They established what they called the National Government, an institution so effectually hidden from the eyes of the uninitiated, that it may be deemed a myth, were it not that its decrees were executed with fatal punctuality. But the most powerful weapon in the hands of the revolution-makers was the institution of the national gendarmerie, now known as the "hanging gendarmerie." This was a secret police, of wonderfully perfect organization, distributed over the country, in bands varying in number from two and three to twenty and thirty, according to the wants of the locality in

which they were stationed. These men were for the most part foreigners; those amongst them who were Poles were the lowest of society, such as are to be found in every country; men who from their boyhood upwards have seldom had a stationary home, except when in a public prison; men familiar with crime, and who can be easily induced to "do murder for a meed." These elements were compounded into a "national gendarmerie," and trained to assume every species of disguise, they went about the streets in cities armed with concealed poignards, with which as they passed a "marked man" they stabbed him. In the commencement of the revolution, it was almost impossible to detect these assassins, their disguise was so complete, and they chose their time so well. They commenced their work in the early dusk, before the streets were quite deserted, so that they could profit by the double advantages offered by the presence of the passengers and the advancing obscurity.

This system of stabbing in the streets is

one of the most hideous treasons against humanity that assassination ever invented. It was done so quietly ; the victim fell, and when the passers-by ran to his assistance, they found him dying, or perhaps already dead, of a stab in the heart. As the practice of this crime spread, the terror of the inhabitants in the different cities became intense. No mother who blessed her son as he left her house in the morning, could reckon upon ever seeing him alive again. No wife who embraced her husband as he left his home, could be sure that before night his murdered corpse might not be laid at her feet.

I must premise that before things had reached this height in the cities, many of the Polish noblemen and landowners who had, at first, abetted the revolution, had discovered their mistake. They found that they had placed themselves in the hands of men who were revolution-makers by profession, that a wonderfully well-devised system of terror had been brought into operation, and that instead of becoming necessary to what they had hoped

would be the regeneration of their country, they found themselves instruments in the hands of men who recognised no law but the dagger or the gallows. Remonstrance was vain, they could not free themselves from the clasp of the spectre they had raised, and nothing remained for them but to retire to their homes, and, with barricaded doors and windows, try to defend themselves from the incursions of these national gendarmerie, who went about extorting contributions for defraying the expenses of the revolution. Refusal to comply with these demands was attended with the risk of assassination.

When the secret of the Polish revolution was discovered, when numbers of the anti-Russian Poles perceived that they had been deceived, that they had unwittingly sold themselves to a secret society, which as Kossuth expressed it, *saura se faire obéir*, they would most willingly have retired from the trap into which they had fallen, but the issue was barred with poignards. The exactions of the *soi-disant* National Government were exorbitant. There

is scarcely a landed proprietor in the country whose revenue has not become embarrassed by the sums he has been obliged to pay to the revolutionists. I have seen nobles and large landed proprietors living in hourly terror of assassination, barricaded in their own houses, dreading the entrance of the "hanging gendarmerie," to whose presence in the country they might have been themselves instrumental, but who now kept them in perpetual terror.

I saw a very sad instance of the effects produced by this terrorism. I visited Count Colonthai at his residence in Warsaw, where, with his family and his father-in-law, he had retired some months before. When the Count saw the revolution in its true light, he was desirous of immediately leaving the country with his wife, his property being so circumstanced, that he could do so without loss. But it was otherwise with his father-in-law. He could not leave Poland at so short a notice without great pecuniary loss. His son-in-law consented to remain. In the house where I

saw them they lived barricaded, and as in a state of siege. It had been so for months. The ladies of the family looked pale and anxious; I saw them sit at the dinner-table without tasting food, and the lady of the house told me that but in compliment to her guests she would not have appeared at all. Her anticipations of evil were founded upon what she had already suffered and seen others suffer. Her old father had not been able to resist the effects that the hourly dread of assassination wrought upon his mind. His reason wandered. It was one amongst the many calamities occasioned by the national gendarmerie.

The National Government organized this gendarmerie in the first instance, for the purpose of intimidating the peasantry and those inhabitants of the towns who were not inclined to revolt; for, I am sorry to be compelled to say, that the worst enemy that the Polish peasant ever knew was his Polish landlord. When we speak of the "patriotic" Poles, those who have at any time risen against their

foreign rulers, we must remember that these "patriots" were all nobles and landowners; there were no peasants in these patriot bands. I say it with a feeling of shame, because of my hereditary admiration for the Poles, but truth compels me to repeat that in Poland little sympathy exists between tenant and land-owner. Consequently, the peasantry had no interest in revolutions, and it was to intimidate that class that the national gendarmerie were first organized. It was on the peasantry that these bands of hired assassins, these off-scourings of every country in Europe, first practised their barbarities; and when the Polish nobles, they who had abetted this revolution, discovered the great error they had committed, and wished to retrace their steps, they, in turn, became obnoxious to the power they had themselves raised up in the land, and were made to suffer in loss of property, and too frequently in loss of life.

The plotters and framers of this revolution were men who understood perfectly well the work they had in hand, and in no instance

did they show their skill more than in their successful efforts to mislead the European press. I speak especially with reference to the press of France and England, those countries where sympathy for the Poles has been most strongly felt. "Our Correspondents" on both sides of the Channel were loud in their outcry against the enemies of the Poles, but unfortunately they did not at first know—have they yet learned?—who were the worst enemies of the Poles during the late insurrection.

There is not, perhaps, a man in England who was not deceived as to the character and origin of the late insurrection in Poland. The British Government were deceived, and when they at first so warmly interfered in the affairs of Poland, it was because they were then under the impression that the movement in Poland was a national one. Lord Napier, the English Ambassador at St. Petersburg, first discovered through reliable sources that the British ministers had been misinformed, and that the well-contrived and terribly executed

revolution was not the work of the Poles, except in so far as they had been instruments in the hands of cosmopolitan revolutionists.

It was very much to the honour of the British Government that they hastened to expostulate with Russia upon her treatment of the Poles. It was a generous impulse becoming the Government of a free people, and one for which the Polish nobility will always feel grateful, but none know better than the noble Poles themselves how much falsehood was in the reports circulated with regard to the late insurrection. When the British ministers learned the facts of the case, and saw that they had been misled, they felt that their interference had been misplaced. They were striding with a war pace towards a nation whose exact relations with her dependencies at that moment they did not understand. They retraced their steps, and, for this movement, which not alone policy but honesty would have dictated, they are loudly blamed by some. Nor were the British ministers

ignorant of what little dependence could be placed upon one of England's principal allies, who, it was then discovered, had some months before attempted secret negotiations with Russia, inimical to the policy and interests of this country. It behoved the ministers to act with caution and promptitude, and they did so.

This is the history of the October despatch, about which some persons think there is so much mystery. An undelivered despatch cannot be considered a parliamentary document, but were the disputed despatch made public, it would only serve to convince the English people that the ministry having acted generously in the first instance, acted prudently in the second. What would the feelings of the English people be, if, pursuing a well-intentioned but mistaken policy, the Government had drifted them into war with Russia? What would they say if, at the end of some months, after money and human life had been uselessly squandered, we should only then learn the truth, and discover that we had not been fighting in the cause of op-

pressed Poland, but for the benefit of the cosmopolitan revolutionists? As much has been said about this recalled despatch, as if it were an event unexampled in the annals of diplomacy, but diplomatists on both sides of the House know that such is not the case, and were the ministerial benches to become filled by gentlemen opposed in politics to those who now sit there, and should political combinations, exactly similar to those now under discussion, arise, there can be no doubt but that the new occupants of the ministerial benches, actuated by a sense of duty to the country, would behave in precisely the same way as that in which the present ministry have acted.

Another circumstance connected with the Polish insurrection, which the English people could scarcely divine, is that the getters-up of that insurrection did the Czar of Russia service of grave importance. The Czar had emancipated the serfs, and by so doing had wounded the prejudices of a large and powerful party in Russia—men who did not wish to

see the old system of things changed. It will be remembered that the year before last, conflagrations broke out in different parts of Russia, and a great deal of property was destroyed. These fires were supposed to be expressions of hostility directed against the Czar and his advisers. The Russians, though they regard the Czar with feelings little short of worship, were not all quite pleased with his proceedings towards the serfs. The revolution-makers profited by these symptoms of discontent in Russia, to hasten their negotiations with the Poles. The insurrection broke out. The two greatest nations in Europe openly expressed sympathy for the Poles, and the remonstrances addressed by their governments to the Czar sounded threateningly. The patriotism of the fanatical Russians rose to a terrible pitch. Their Czar was insulted, their country threatened. They declared themselves ready to die for both. Not since the commencement of the Crimean war had the Muscovite nation been so electrified. It was not the Czar, it was not Prince Gortschakoff, who would have

replied to a hostile despatch—it was sixty millions of combined and angry Russians.

A rupture between England and Russia would not serve the cause of Poland, but it would help to carry out the designs of the revolution-makers, who have done the Poles such heavy detriment. It would exactly coincide with the object contemplated by the organizers of the “hanging gendarmerie.”

During a visit I made in the district of Wlodslawek, of which Prince Emile de Sayn Wittgenstein is governor, I asked the Prince to give me a sketch of his experience during the insurrection, and to say what he thought of the organization of the “National Gendarmerie.” The Prince wrote me a long letter on the subject. His account agreed with the information I had already received and with my own experience. As the Prince speaks very freely both of the “hanging gendarmerie” and of his own exertions in suppressing them, I subjoin his letter.

CHAPTER II.

PRINCE WITTGENSTEIN'S LETTER.

“THE institution of the national gendarmes, which the people, with their characteristic felicitousness of expression, have denominated ‘the hanging gendarmes,’ was originally designed for the purpose of obtaining by force and by systematic terrorism, what the revolutionary party in Poland had not been able to obtain either by patriotic speeches or by promises, or even by the powerful influence of the clergy, that is to say, the voluntary co-operation of the agricultural classes and the richest of the bourgeoisie in the Insurrection of 1863.

“The first acts of cruelty on the part of these national gendarmerie took place, as well as I

can remember, about the end of May and the beginning of June. Drawn without exception from the dregs of the populace of the towns, recruited amongst liberated malefactors and vagabonds of every kind, that the revolution has let loose upon this unfortunate country, the 'National Gendarmerie' rose suddenly and simultaneously all over the country, and inaugurated their advent by hangings *en masse*, which for a time had the effect of completely suspending the co-operation we were beginning to receive from the peasantry, and which ultimately contributed more than all the repressive measures of the Government to recall the great mass of the population to a correct view of the state of the country, and made them apprehend a future of inevitable ruin and carnage, should Poland be abandoned to the rule of a party that employed such auxiliaries; in a word, the proceedings of the hanging gendarmerie effected a powerful reaction in favour of order and of the established Government, a reaction which still operates in all classes of society and in all parts of the kingdom.

“Established in detachments of three or four in every village, and upon every large estate, these Thugs of modern civilization spread like a net-work over the whole country, obeying district officers, who in turn obeyed the commands of provincial chiefs, who received their orders direct from Warsaw.

“The mission of these men was to collect by threats of assassination the levies called national taxes, to point out the recalcitrant peasants and oblige them by force to join the revolutionary bands, and, as I have said, by incessant cruelty, by accumulated assassinations, to compel that co-operation which terror alone could procure them. Concealing themselves by day and doing their work of terror by night, they often acted as guides to bodies of troops sent to track them ; and the very peasants that they oppressed, hid them or protected their flight, knowing that if they did otherwise the gallows and flaming villages would follow quickly the slightest suspicion of connivance with the Russian Government. It has often happened that words dropped from the lips of a child, of a

drunken person, or a village gossip, that the delay in the execution of an order, a passing rumour, a refusal to go to the forest, or like trifling causes, have sufficed to bring ruin and death on entire families. A delay in sending provisions or the means of transport that had been demanded, a want of money to pay these contributions, denominated 'voluntary,' was invariably followed by cruel retaliations, most frequently by death; and if the person threatened succeeded in eluding his executioners, his family were obliged to pay his debt to 'the vengeance of his country.'

"It was under such circumstances that a *patrouille* that I sent into the neighbourhood of Wincenti, in the government of Angustowo, found a family hanged because the father, who had refused to join a revolutionary band, had taken flight. The members of this family who were hanged consisted of the man's wife and his five children, the youngest between two and three years of age.

"In a military excursion that I made through the same government in the month of July, I

met at Rajgroed an old half-pay Russian officer, Captain Nitschaeff, who had lived in that town a great many years, and who had become *suspected* by the district commander of the 'National Gendarmerie,' and against whom sentence of death was recorded. Warned in time by his friends he escaped. The executioners not finding him seized his wife, the mother of four children; and the unhappy man appealed to me to assist him in his search for her. Two days later I received a report from the military commander of the district of Angustowo, saying that the body of Madame Nitschaeff had been found hanging on a tree in the forest of Lipsk. Her eyes had been plucked out, and her tongue and breasts cut off.

"An elderly lady, owner of an estate in the neighbourhood of Sopockin, received about the same time 100 lashes, because she had not prepared at the appointed time a number of vehicles required by a certain band of revolutionists.

"It was after this fashion that the apostles of the national Polish cause preached to the

masses of the population the emancipation and regeneration of their country.

“ But this is not all. There were bands like that of Bonsza, for example, in the government of Plock, that traversed the country, hanging at random in every village through which they passed one or more peasants, merely to keep up a feeling of terror in some, and to secure the silence and co-operation of others. This Bonsza, I must observe, was originally a servant, and was dismissed his employment for theft. He commenced his political career by hanging his master. The peasantry became so depressed, so brutified, by these continual threats of death, that they at length sunk into dejection, allowing themselves to be slaughtered like sheep.

“ The following circumstance occurred whilst I was at Suwalki. In a large village, of more than a hundred families, situate, if I remember correctly, in the neighbourhood of Segny, a national gendarme appeared one day. He was armed with two revolvers. He assembled all the inhabitants in the open air, and made

them a long speech, reproaching them with their want of patriotism. He chose at random four, and hanged them in the presence of the villagers, without a man of that multitude making an effort to save them.

“I shall relate you another fact that occurred fifteen days since at Gombin, the district at present under my jurisdiction; a district in which, thank Heaven! owing to the activity of my leaders of columns, and the good dispositions of the peasantry, a like circumstance had not occurred for two months previously. A German colonist, named Böhme, who some time before had informed the authorities that one of these cut-throats was hidden in the village, received a citation, I know not under what pretext, to appear before the tribunal of the city of Gombin. Having arrived at Gombin he was seized in the middle of the street by three unarmed men, who rushed out of an inn, and in presence of a number of bystanders tied his hands behind his back, threw him into a cart, and drove out of the town. They made a long *détour* through the environs, torturing

their prisoner the whole time in the most cruel manner. They cut away the inside of his nostrils, fled his back, and flogged him incessantly with whips. The victim suffered so that the imprint of his teeth was found in the wood of the blood-stained cart. Having arrived at the house of a proprietor, whom I shall not name, the executioners halted, and ordered some brandy. Whilst they were enjoying themselves their victim profited by the opportunity, and, all bleeding as he was, fled and hid in the garden. The executioners, aided by the servants of the nobleman, pursued him, whilst the daughter of the house looked on from the window. The pursuers overtook the fugitive, carried him a little further still, flogging him until he became insensible. They then flung him into a yard, where he expired of cold and pain. The torturers returned again, and in mockery hung the dead body in a Protestant cemetery a few versts beyond.

“ On learning these horrible details I resolved to make a terrible example, convinced that by doing so I should save the lives of many. I,

therefore, imposed a fine of 3,000 roubles on the city of Gombin, and ordered the house which had been the theatre of the crime to be sacked from top to bottom, leaving the owners only their personal effects. The effect of this example was, that within three days, the three assassins were delivered up by the peasants themselves, who certainly, if I had acted with less severity, would have hesitated to take such an initiative. One of these assassins was a German named Müller. I ordered the three to be hanged at Gombin.

“It is a remarkable fact with regard to the national gendarmes,—whose number I must say diminishes daily, thanks to our incessant pursuit, and thanks above all to the spirit of conservation which for some time past has awaked in the peasantry and land-owners, and which stimulates them to track these cut-throats themselves, and deliver them up to justice,—it is, I must say, remarkable that a third, at least, of these gendarmes are foreigners, for the most part Prussians. One was lately brought before me who was a Schleswiger.

This man was caught at the very moment when he was about to hang a woman. He had come from his own country to advance the Polish propaganda by means of the patriotic cord.

“This class of wretches will have soon disappeared, thanks to the activity with which the people join the troops in freeing the country from them. Their great stronghold at present is Warsaw, whose vast rabble quickly fills the gaps made by those who ‘meurent pour la patrie.’ But the energy of Count de Berg, supported by that of General Trepoff, will soon suppress these.

“Such are the ‘martyrs’ of the Polish cause whom *Russian barbarity*, to the great scandal of the foreign press, punishes with death.

“I shall mention a few whom I have myself got hanged, and who would have deserved death in any other country, even in liberal England. I do not speak of regenerated Italy, that now incessantly pours forth upon us her civilizing phrases and her superabundance of patriotic vagabonds. She has proved in the

city of Naples that she did not hesitate to shoot down by hundreds those whom she called brigands. The Italians did not look very closely to examine whether amongst the slain there were women and children. Observe that during the entire time that the revolution lasted in Poland not one woman was executed.

“I shall now speak of the martyrs I have made:—

“Panlinsky, head of the ‘National Gendarmerie’ in the district of Gostynin, for having put to death more than thirty peasants; of whom twelve were shot at one time in a row. He hanged a woman who was *enceinte*, and whose child was born at the moment that the mother was strangled. The infant was nailed to a tree close by.

“Corfini, chief of the ‘National Gendarmerie’ of the district of Wlodslawek; convicted of having assassinated twenty-nine persons, amongst whom were two women whom he got flogged to death.

“Bliachowski, successor to Panlinsky; who

had assassinated an unknown number of persons.

“Kopczinsky; he had flogged a woman to death, stoned one man, and shot two others.

“I could mention some others of the same calibre, but I am at present pressed for time. I merely give you this sketch in order that on your return to England, where people know how to distinguish between truth and falsehood, you may take our part against systematic calumny and charlatanism, and may open the eyes of those amongst your compatriots who are willing to see.

“I shall add a piece of intelligence which I have just learned from a letter that has been seized at Warsaw. It is from one of the chiefs of the ‘National Gendarmerie’ of the government of Plock; who, finding political assassination by the poignard and pistol too dangerous for the executors, proposes to replace this system by poison, a means which he praises highly, as superior to the poignard in facility and secrecy—with the additional advantage of

being capable of being administered by women, who certainly will not refuse thus to concur in the great patriotic work.

“I wish you a pleasant journey, and hope to see you soon.

“PRINCE EMILE DE SAYN WITTGENSTEIN.

“WŁODSLAWEK,
28th January, 1864.”

CHAPTER III.

WILNA.

IN the August of last year I left Petersburg for Poland. Since the breaking out of the Insurrection in the latter country, every traveller before he can obtain his railway ticket must show his passport to a police officer at the station. My passport being in order, I at once obtained a *permis de départ*, and took my place in a first-class carriage for Wilna. We left Petersburg at 10 o'clock, P.M. and did not arrive at the capital of Lithuania till between 7 and 8 o'clock next evening. The distance, however, is not more than about 300 English miles. My fare was £3 3s.; and for my baggage, consisting of a portmanteau and travel-

ling bag, I paid about 8s. The charges, it will thus be seen, are higher than on any railway in Europe, and yet the Warsaw line, as far as regards the interests of the shareholders, has been a ruinous undertaking. The accommodation at all the stations was very bad, and the prices for refreshment absurdly high.

On arriving at the Wilna station, I found it as free from police restrictions as the station at Windsor. A *commissionaire* took charge of my baggage, and I drove in a very comfortable carriage, infinitely superior to the public conveyances to be found at the railway stations of Petersburg, to the *Hôtel de l'Europe*.

This hotel is kept by a German who was many years resident in England, and who speaks our language fluently. There is a degree of comfort, cleanliness, and order in this establishment not to be found in any of the hotels of Petersburg, with the single exception of Miss Benson's, on the English Quay. The charges are exceedingly moderate, when it is remembered that the town is at present crowded with military. You can dine

at the *table d'hôte* for about 2s., and have a comfortable room for 3s. a night. These details may seem trivial; but, as many of my countrymen will in all possibility go over the same road as myself, to visit places which have now attained a melancholy celebrity, I have determined to give them all the information I can with regard to pecuniary expenses and personal comfort.

CHAPTER IV.

GENERAL MOURAVIEFF.

THE next day I went to the *château*, which was formerly a palace belonging to the Kings of Poland. I was kindly received by General Mouravieff, to whom I presented the letters of recommendation which I had brought with me from Petersburg. The general told me that he had received instructions from his Government to show me the prisons and hospitals, the courts of justice, and any other public institutions that I might wish to inspect. "Here," General Mouravieff said, "there is no mystery, there is no concealment; everything is done openly and in the face of day." I remarked that I was very glad that his Excellency was so willing to facilitate my

inquiries. I had come determined, I told him, to believe nothing that I did not see with my own eyes, and the truth of which I had not submitted to the severest tests. Reports of cruelties practised by the Russian authorities in Lithuania, I said, had reached the Governments of Western Europe, and had caused remonstrances to be addressed to the Government at Petersburg. "I do not acknowledge," the general said, very sternly, "the right of any foreign Government to interfere in the internal administration of the Russian Empire. What Prince Gortschakoff's mode of treating this question is I do not know, but this I will say, that I have here an army of 120,000 men, and that I am ready to hold my own against any foreign Power whatsoever. The entire district under my command is now perfectly quiet, and you are safer from insult and annoyance in the streets of Wilna than in the streets of Petersburg. This army of 120,000 men was not necessary for the pacification of the province; all that was required was a good administration. When I arrived

here I found a number of Poles in Government employment. I dismissed them all, and placed Russians in their stead. My army is now idle ; there is nothing for them to do. I sent some of my troops the other day into the Kingdom, to assist in suppressing the insurrection in a part close to my Government. The Grand Duke, *que le bon Dieu le benisse !* has ideas different from mine about the way to restore order. However, that is not my business ; you will be able to judge for yourself when you go to Warsaw." The general then offered to allow any officer of his staff that I chose to accompany me in my visits to the places I wished to see.

I had had the good fortune of being introduced to Colonel de Lebedeff, Director of the Committee of Prisons of Petersburg. The Colonel had not long before been in England, collecting information about our penal system, and was on intimate terms with the late Sir Joshua Jebb. I mentioned Colonel de Lebedeff's name, and was very much pleased when General Mouravieff said he would give him instructions to accompany me in my visits of inspection.

CHAPTER V.

PRISON-HOSPITALS.

THE next morning Colonel de Lebedeff called upon me, and we drove together to the monastery of St. Jacob, which is situated at a short distance outside the town, in the midst of most picturesque and fertile scenery. This monastery has, under the direction of Colonel de Lebedeff, been converted into a commodious, clean, and well-ordered hospital for the sick and wounded insurgents. It has been modelled, as nearly as the difficulties of the case would allow, upon the plan of our English hospitals. Every ward, and every cell where the patient was in solitary confinement, was provided with all the requisites for cleanliness. In one part of the building, on the ground-

floor, were vapour baths, something like the so-called Turkish baths in London, together with the ordinary hot and cold water baths. Attached to the hospital was an ice-house ; for ice is largely used by Russian medical men, with excellent effect, for the suppression of inflammation in case of wounds, fractures, amputations, &c. When the application of ice is necessary, an iron rod of a semicircular form is placed across the bed of the patient, forming an arch immediately over the part inflamed. From this arch are suspended waterproof oil-cloth bags, filled with ice, which touch the wound just sufficiently to keep it cool, without causing any painful pressure.

In the first room which we visited were five men ; the oldest appeared to be sixty years of age, the youngest thirty. They were all labouring under mental derangement, caused either by fear at having fallen into the hands of the Russians, or by the scenes of desolation and death of which they had lately been witness. One man took me by the hand, and told me that he was the king of Poland,

and that he knew me to be the Emperor of the French, and that he hoped I would speak to the Czar in his favour. There was a keeper with these poor creatures, and there are sentries constantly outside the door, to prevent any accidents occurring.

We then visited the room in which was Chaplinsky, the young student who, in obedience to the orders of the National Government, conducted Bankowsky and Marchewsky to the house of M. Domeiko, the Marshal of the Nobility of the government of Wilna. The secret tribunal of the National Government had sentenced the marshal to death, and Bankowsky, an assistant surgeon, was appointed to execute the sentence, with the aid of Marchewsky. As both these young men were strangers in Wilna, Chaplinsky was ordered to be their guide. It will be remembered that all three were taken separately. Chaplinsky at first denied all knowledge of the crime ; but, when he was confronted with the two others, he fell senseless on the ground, and the shock to his system was so great that he was taken

to the hospital and placed under medical care. When we entered the room he was lying in his bed in a state of lethargy. His cheeks were pale and sunken, and he had the emaciated look of one in the last stages of decline. When he spoke, his voice was weak and plaintive; and, as it evidently distressed him to talk, we left him, having first assured ourselves that he was properly cared for by his attendant.

We then visited a large ward, some fifty feet long by fourteen in width. There were twenty beds, ranged in two lines in the centre of the room, and at the head of each bed was a board on which was painted the name of the patient, together with the nature of the wound or illness from which he was suffering. Each patient, not only in this ward, but throughout the hospital, was furnished by the authorities with clothing, consisting of a shirt, white canvass trousers, slippers, and a loose dressing-gown of coarse striped linen. In this, and in a corresponding ward of the same size, I found, amongst the other patients, six youths, of ages varying between fifteen and eighteen years.

They were students, who had run away from college and joined in the insurrection, and were taken on the field of battle. They were mild-looking, gentlemanly lads, but their captors reported them as having fought with the most desperate courage. One of them, sixteen years of age, had received no less than seventeen bayonet stabs ! He was then convalescent, which fact I looked upon as a proof that the medical treatment in the hospital was exceedingly good. Another youth of the same age had his left hand, which had been shattered by a musket ball, amputated. He also was convalescent. Both were quite cheerful, and readily answered my questions. I told them, as I had made it a rule to tell all the captured Poles with whom I came in contact, that I was an Englishman, and that if they had any request to make, that I was ready to assist them to the best of my power. They told me, in reply to my questions, that their food was good and abundant, and that they were treated kindly by the officers of the hospital. As it was near the dinner-hour, I waited till that

meal was brought into the ward. Each convalescent patient received a tureen of very palatable soup, a dish of roast or boiled meat, and a loaf of bread. Those who were still suffering had a diet prescribed by the doctors. In the latter category was a youth of eighteen, whose entrails had been frightfully torn by a gun-shot wound. He tried to look cheerful, and smiled feebly when I approached his bed. He said his sufferings were great, but that the doctors assured him he would recover. He whispered to me that I could do him a great favour. 'There was a person, he said, that he knew was unhappy about him—and here for an instant a hectic flush came into his pale face, and his eyes filled with tears—he knew she was in Wilna, he faltered out, and would I find her, and tell her that he was alive and would recover? He told me her name and the locality where her father's house was situated. I promised to do as he wished, and to come and see him again. He pressed my hand in both of his, and then hid his face in the pillow. Not far off lay a boy of fifteen years old. A

Russian soldier had, in the charge, stabbed him in the breast with his bayonet, and the weapon had gone through and through his frail body. When I stooped down to speak to him his cheeks were wet with tears. He said it was not the pain of his wound that made him cry, but that he was thinking of his two little sisters and of his mother, who loved him so much.

CHAPTER VI.

WOUNDED INSURGENTS.

THAT evening I dined with General Mouravieff, and, as I sat beside him on a bench in the garden of the palace, I told him of those poor lads who lay wounded in the hospital. The general is an old man, he is a father, he has known what it is to suffer. His heart was touched by what I said, and he promised that all these boys should be released as soon as they were well, and be handed over to their families. Three days after, I returned to the hospital with a tolerably light heart, for I had good news for some of the inmates. The kind Russian officer who had accompanied me had, in his pocket-book, two or three lines full of a simple, childlike love, written by the

trembling hand of a young girl. When we entered the ward where the poor wounded youth lay that had asked me to let that same young lady know that he was alive and would recover, his face lit up with hope. We gave him the pocket-book, open at the place where the lines were written, and walked away whilst he read them. It was his best medicine. How bright and happy he looked when we turned back to speak to him! My friend, the father himself of boys and girls, gave him a pencil and told him he might write an answer on the same leaf. Hurriedly he wrote, but it was on another page, for that on which the young girl had written was blistered with his tears.

I then turned to look for the boy who had been wounded in the breast, to tell him he would soon be well and happy in his own home, with his mother and his little sisters who loved him so much. He was not in the ward; his bed was empty. I found him alone, in a room in another part of the building. He was lying on his back; his long fair hair

was combed away from his pale young face, which looked more placid than when I had seen it last. A crucifix lay upon the coverlet of his bed, and his hands were crossed meekly upon his breast, as if he were praying. When I came nearer I saw that his sorrows and his sufferings were ended for ever—he was dead!

He was buried according to the rites of the Catholic Church, in the cemetery of Wilna. A pious hand placed a small wooden cross at the head of his narrow grave, and a kind-hearted Russian soldier planted a few flowers in the freshly-turned earth of the boy-patriot's last resting-place. But long before the flowers wither in the cold of the coming winter, his young life so ruthlessly closed, his lonely death-bed and his silent tears, will all be forgotten, save by the sisters he loved so well, and by the widowed mother, who mourns in her desolate home the loss of her only son.

In the same hospital was a prisoner named Albert. He was a civil engineer; he had resided many years in Paris, and spoke French

remarkably well. He was taken prisoner not long before on the defeat of a band, of which he, from his superior intelligence, was supposed to have been the chief. He said that, as a Pole, he was naturally anxious that his country should be free, but that he knew the insurrection could not succeed without the aid of France and England. "Then," I said, "why did you not wait for an armed intervention on the part of the Western Powers?" He was forced into the movement, he replied, in opposition to his better judgment. His health was bad, he continued, and he obtained leave from the chief of the works where he was employed to come for change of air to Wilna, where he had a cousin who was a curate. When he called at his cousin's residence he was from home, and he determined to take a walk in the neighbourhood whilst waiting his return. During his walk in the suburbs of the town he met some young men, with whom he entered into conversation. They told him that a national rising was intended, and that every Pole ought to join in the insurrection. They

said they belonged to a band which was stationed at a short distance, and that he had better become a member. He objected, upon which they showed him that they were armed, and swore they would kill him if he did not join them, for that he was then in possession of their secret, and that for their own safety they could not allow him to return back into the town. Seeing there was no other alternative, he went with them, and after walking some miles they found the band bivouacked in a wood. He then took the oath of fidelity to the national cause, and stuck to his comrades through good and evil fortune till they were beaten by the Russians and he was made prisoner.

CHAPTER VII.

POLITICAL PRISONERS.

THE day following my first visit to the Hospital of St. Jacob we went to see the Convent of the "Missionaries," which had been fitted up as a prison for three hundred men and sixty women. As a general rule, when the accusation is of a serious nature, the prisoner is kept in solitary confinement till after trial. The convent cells are appropriated to this purpose, and the large rooms are inhabited in common by those who have already been tried and are waiting the execution of their sentence, and also by those against whom there is no charge of an aggravated nature. We first went into a room where there were twenty women of the humbler class, all lodged apart from

the other female prisoners, who were ladies of rank. I asked, on entering, if any of the women spoke French, when a rather well-dressed young person hurried towards me, and, in a very excited way and in excellent French, exclaimed, that she felt she would die if she were kept much longer in prison; that she was innocent, that she had taken no part whatever in the insurrection, and that she was separated from her baby, who she knew must perish without her care. The gaoler told us she was subject to fits of great excitement, that her mind wandered strangely at times, and that the doctor said she was suffering from a form of milk fever. Her baby about whom she was then crying so bitterly was dead. All the female prisoners in the Convent of the Missionaries were accused of being members of a committee for nursing the sick and wounded insurgents, of holding seditious meetings in their houses, and of distributing the proclamations of the National Government. In solitary confinement, in one of the cells, I found a girl of between nineteen

and twenty. She was accused of having secretly received insurgents in her house, where the oath of fidelity to the national cause was administered to them by a Catholic priest. The priest and some of the men to whom he had administered the oath were arrested, and all admitted the truth of the accusation made against them. But the girl, when confronted with them, denied that they had ever been to her house, or that she had ever seen them before in her life, and refused to answer any of the questions addressed to her by the court. It was evidently from a determination not to incriminate others that she persisted in her denial. She had been three weeks in solitary confinement; she had no books to read, no companions to talk to, nothing to divert her mind from her own sad thoughts. She had no other fare than the rough prison diet, she saw no other faces than those of her gaolers, and was addressed by no other human voices than those of her judges. Yet her determination to give no information as to the part she had taken in the insurrection seemed as deter-

mined as ever. From her cell I went to that of the priest who was her accomplice. Nothing could be more remarkable than the contrast between the two. The moral force displayed by the girl seemed to be totally wanting in the man. He had already avowed all, and admitted his complicity with the young woman. He was an elderly, heavy-looking person, with a countenance in which there was a strange want of either dignity or intelligence. He closed the breviary he was reading when we entered, and stood before us with a crouching, broken-spirited look. He told his story over again without reservation. He then seized the hand of my friend, the colonel, and, in a voice broken with sobs, implored him to say if there were any danger of his being put to death. The colonel assured him there was not, for which information he showed a servile gratitude. We then entered a room where seven Catholic clergymen were confined. They all stood up when we appeared, and returned our salute in silence. They were grave, dignified-looking men. The oldest appeared to be

about sixty, with white hair and a form prematurely bent. He, however, showed in the ascetic lines of his wan face the same passionless serenity as his younger and stronger fellow-prisoners. They were all accused of inciting their flocks to take part in the insurrection. From thence we went to a very large room, which had formerly been the refectory of the convent. Here were imprisoned more than thirty ladies of different ages, from seventeen to forty. Amongst the younger, some were very pretty, delicate-looking girls. But even the prettiest and most delicate amongst them when first spoken to assumed a defiant and rather fierce expression, which contrasted strangely with the soft outlines and gentle voice of youth. Their beauty, however, was not disfigured; it was merely changed by the expression. They looked like young falcons that had just been caged, with eyes as proud and courage as undaunted. It was their hour for dinner. It was Friday, a day of abstinence in the Catholic Church. The food was therefore not very palatable. It

consisted of vegetable soup, bread, and salt fish. It requires an appetite sharpened by active exercise in the open air to eat such a repast with pleasure. Very few of the portions served out were consequently eaten, and some were left almost untouched.

In reply to my inquiries, those ladies who stood near me said, that in general the food given them, though plain, was good and wholesome in quality, and always more than sufficient in quantity. Some of the young girls, however, objected to being obliged to eat with a horn spoon and a pewter fork. They all spoke with more boldness and *abandon* than the male prisoners. None of them offered an excuse for having taken part in the insurrectionary movement, but, on the contrary, seemed proud of what they had done, and regretted that they had not been able to give more efficient aid to the "national cause." I went apart with some of the oldest, who were all married women. We were out of hearing of the officers of the prison, whose proximity, I was afraid, might prevent them

from speaking freely on a subject which had been reported to the English and French Governments, and had caused a great deal of indignation. I asked these ladies to tell me with the same frankness that they had already shown in speaking on other subjects, if any of those who then heard me, or any of their friends or acquaintances, had been struck or beaten, or in any way outraged, by the Russian authorities. They all, with one voice, answered "No," and seemed surprised that I should have asked the question. They complained of the suddenness with which they had been hurried to prison, without being allowed to make sufficient preparation, of the bad accommodation, and of their not being permitted to take exercise; but with regard to insult or outrage, they persisted in saying there was no ground for such a charge.

We then visited a room in which six young men were confined. These prisoners, as well as many others that I subsequently saw, amused themselves, or rather sought a diversion from their thoughts, by moulding different

figures in bread. Some of these productions showed a great deal of art. I have several now in my possession. One is an obelisk, surrounded by a railing, and all the details, even to the bas-reliefs on the plinth and the tracery on the iron-work, are represented; another is a pretty equestrian statue; and a third is that of an old man with a long beard, who is leaning on a stick. All these figures are coloured either black or light brown, the materials being supplied by the prison authorities. One of the six young fellows to whom I have alluded made me a present of the figure of the old man with the long beard. It was so nicely executed, that I sent it as a curiosity to General Mouravieff. The artist had been an officer in the Russian army, but, on the breaking out of the insurrection, he joined a party of his fellow-Poles who had taken up arms against the Imperial Government, and, after many adventures, he was captured and sent a prisoner to Wilna. He looked in bad health, yet he assured us he was quite well, but that the

sudden change from an active open-air life to the atmosphere of a prison did not improve his appearance. He thanked me for my visit to himself and his companions, and begged me to accept the statuette that I have mentioned. I did not see him again till two days later. He was no longer breathing the atmosphere of a prison; he was in the open air outside Wilna. He cast a glance of recognition upon my friend and myself, who stood amongst the crowd, and then, whilst calmly offering his last prayer to Heaven, the signal was given, the soldiers fired, and he lay still and dead before us—the first ball had gone through his heart. This was Macovetzky, who was shot on the 29th of last August, in accordance with the sentence of a court-martial. Sentence had been pronounced, and the day fixed for his execution, when he gave me the statuette, but he knew nothing of his intended fate till he was led out to be shot. In the evening, when I was leaving General Mouravieff's study, he said suddenly, "Ah, I had almost forgotten it; here is something which

belongs to you ;” and he took from his table and placed in my hand the statuette which had been given me by Macovetzky. I received it with a strange sensation : it seemed to me like a present from the dead.

CHAPTER VIII.

POLITICAL ASSASSINS.

I ALSO visited the Dominican Convent, which had been fitted up as a prison. Here twenty-eight persons were confined, five of whom were accused of acts entailing the punishment of death. In the first cell which I entered was Bankowsky, the assistant surgeon who had attempted to murder M. Domeiko. He was not alone. In the same room was a youth who seemed to belong to the humbler classes of society. He, because he had not received the éntire sum promised him as an accomplice, "turned King's evidence," as it is termed in England, and assisted the police in capturing Benkowsky and his companion. The would-be murderer was

quite ignorant of the real character of his neighbour, and looked upon him as a friend and fellow-unfortunate. The daring duplicity of the other was most extraordinary. Night and day he remained within a few feet of an assassin who had avowed his crime, and was awaiting his execution from hour to hour, and for whom there was no hope of pardon in this world. That doomed man he had helped to deliver into the hands of justice, and he was with him now as a spy upon his words and actions. It did not seem to occur to him that Benkowsky might, by some accident, discover his real character, and strangle him whilst he slept.

The Poles, as a general rule, are a good-looking people, but Benkowsky had an ill-favoured, sinister look. His hair was of a black colour; he told us it was naturally fair, but that he had it dyed as a means of disguise. Being a surgeon, it was thought that he would be less sensible to human suffering than another, and that, moreover, his anatomical skill would enable him to use the

poignard with more deadly effect. He was, therefore, enrolled amongst the band employed by the "National Government" to assassinate those who were obnoxious to that body. He was chosen, in company with Marcefsky, to murder M. Domeiko, for which he was promised a sum of money, the whole of which, however, he did not receive, for the money advanced for the expenses of his journey and of his stay in Wilna had been deducted. After the crime, he dressed himself in woman's clothes, and hid for some days outside the town in the cemetery. When he was captured at the railway station, he had with him a number of roubles which had been sent him by the "National Government."

We then went to see Marcefsky. He seemed about the same age as Benkowsky, namely, twenty-six or seven. He was little more than five feet in height, with broad shoulders and a very massive head, in which what phrenologists call the organ of firmness was strongly developed. We then entered a large room in which were eleven prisoners.

They, as well as all the accused that I saw in the Dominican Convent, looked at us in an anxious, feverish manner, as if they expected that we had brought with us some evil tidings. The reason, I subsequently learned, was, that several had only left the prison to be hanged or shot, and that it was considered by those confined there to be something like the Conciergerie at Paris at the time of the first revolution, and that the prisoner left hope behind him on entering its gates. One of those who looked most anxiously at us was a well-dressed youth, whose brother had been executed a few days before. There were also a father and son. The father was an elderly, feeble-looking man, the son was tall and strong, and in the flower of youth. The father's eyes were blood-shot, and his face sallow and haggard. He sat on the side of his bed in an attitude of mute despair. They were both apothecaries in Wilna, and were accused of having supplied poison for anointing the dagger of Benkowsky. When I spoke to the son, he said that his father and himself were inca-

pable of committing so infamous a crime. Yet he said he was willing to bear the ignominy of the accusation and to remain in prison till the case was cleared up; "but oh, sir," he said, "beg of them, for God's sake, to have pity upon my poor old father. He is weak, his health is breaking fast. The shame of having such a crime imputed to him, whose whole life has been blameless, has had a more fatal effect upon him than the imprisonment or the fear of punishment. I implore you to get my father set at liberty, and they may act with me as they please." He then covered his face with his hands and burst into tears. A few hours later their case was laid before General Mouravieff, and, as the accusation turned out to be unfounded, both father and son were set at liberty.

CHAPTER IX.

COURTS-MARTIAL.

THE Military Court, in which all political cases are tried, holds its sittings in one of the houses in the suburbs. The President of the tribunal is Lieutenant-General Wesselitzky, who was well known to several of our officers on the cessation of hostilities at Sebastopol. This court sits with closed doors, and no stranger is admitted without a special permission from General Mouravieff. Not only had I this permission, but the President, General Wesselitzky, gave orders to the door-keepers to admit me whenever I chose to come. On my first visit I found in the ante-room of the court a young Catholic priest, awaiting his turn to be tried by the court-martial which

was sitting within. Into this ante-room the prisoners are admitted one by one, when an officer, who is stationed there for the purpose, hands them a paper divided into two columns. One contains a series of printed questions, opposite to which, in the adjoining column, the prisoner is directed to write his answers. The questions are the names, age, place of birth, religion, and profession of the prisoner, and, lastly, a demand for a statement of the crime of which he is accused. The prisoner is not told by the court, as is the case in England, of the charge upon which he has been arrested; he is left to say what he thinks it is, according to his conscience.

The President, having politely offered me a seat at his table, handed me a list of the prisoners who were to be examined that day, and told me that I might choose from amongst them any that I wished to be tried in my presence. I requested that the Catholic priest I had seen in the ante-room should be placed at the bar. He was at once called in, and directed to sit down close to the table at which

I was seated, so that I might without difficulty ask him any questions I pleased. He, as well as all the prisoners I saw brought before that court, displayed the same feverish, anxious manner that I had observed amongst the persons confined in the Dominican convent.

In reply to my question, put through the court, the prisoner said he was arrested because arms and ammunition had been found concealed in his house. The arms and ammunition were there without his knowledge, and had been placed in his house solely, he said, for the purpose of bringing him into trouble. He stated, that for some time before his arrest he had been preaching in favour of temperance, and met with so much success that the consumption of spirituous liquors amongst his parishioners had considerably diminished. The Jews, who are the persons engaged in the commerce of vodka, or native brandy, in Wilna, were exasperated at the injury done to their trade. They annoyed him at times when he passed through the streets, and on one occasion they gathered in

a crowd before his house, and broke the windows. The chief rioters were punished by the police, and, he said, that it was in revenge for this, as well as for his having preached against the use of ardent spirits, that some of the Jews hid the arms and ammunition in his house, and then laid informations against him as one in league with the insurgents. His house was consequently searched, the arms and ammunition found, and he was imprisoned.

Nearly opposite to the door by which I had entered the apartment where the court sat, was another door, opening into a corridor which led to the back of the building. In the upper panels of this door were bored two holes, of about half an inch in diameter. I observed that a human eye glittered through them occasionally, and then disappeared. Previous to the coming of the priest into court, I asked the president for what these holes were used. He explained that when it was necessary to identify a prisoner, the witness who undertook to do so, peeped at the person on

trial through one of these apertures, and then made his statement in the usual form to an officer of the tribunal by whom he was accompanied. The eyes which glared through these "*judas*" upon the apostle of temperance had not, I am happy to say, a baneful effect, for by order of General Mouravieff he was set at liberty on the following day.

A country lad who could neither read nor write was also put upon his trial. When told to sit down, he thought it was done in mockery, and refused. He explained that when a peasant sat down in the presence of gentlemen in his part of the country the peasant was always beaten. The prisoner had been taken after a conflict between the troops and the band to which he belonged. He stated that he was a shepherd, and that one night some of the insurgent gendarmes, came to the hut in which he lived amongst his flocks, and told him they would hang him if he did not join their band. He joined them because he was afraid, he said, and because, moreover, they carried off

several sheep, for which his master would be sure to bring him to account.

To this statement, which was written down by a clerk, he put his mark in the same way as it is done in England by a person who does not know how to write. I had very little anxiety about his fate, for, as a general rule, all the peasants of Lithuania who were sent to prison for being implicated in the insurrection were, after a short detention, set at liberty.

CHAPTER X.

PEASANT-DEPUTATIONS.

ONE morning that I called at the castle upon General Mouravieff, I found assembled in one of the ante-rooms, twenty-five Polish farmers, each one the deputy elected by his fellows to represent his parish. They were all tall, well-made, good-looking men; they wore long surtouts of rough cloth, jack-boots, and wide breeches, and each had round his neck a brass chain, from which a medal of the same material was suspended. This was his badge of office as head man of the parish. When General Mouravieff came into the room, followed by a numerous staff, all in gorgeous uniforms, the generals wearing their stars and "cordons," the sturdy farmers, not in the least abashed by

the presence of the redoubtable governor, or the splendour by which he was surrounded, bowed respectfully, but not servilely. At their head stood the clerk of the peace for the district, whom they had brought with them to read an address of thanks to the Emperor for having given them General Mouravieff for a governor, who, by his energy, had delivered them from the imposts and cruelties of the insurgents.

The General took the address, which he promised to send to the Emperor, and thanked them for the sentiments which they had expressed towards himself. He asked them if there were still any insurgents in their part of the country. "Thank God," they said, "at present there are none, and we can now live quietly and happily." "No people in the world," said the oldest man amongst them, "could support two Governments without being ruined. We are obliged to pay taxes to the Emperor, and the gendarmes of the National Government took from us money and provisions as they thought proper, and threatened

us with death if we complained. They were the stronger, and we were obliged to submit. But since you, General, have come amongst us, our properties are protected from plunder, and our families from outrage. We are very happy to live under the Emperor, who is the father and friend of the peasants, whereas the insurgents have in every way acted towards us as enemies."

"If you catch any insurgents," said General Mouravieff, "bring them to me, and they shall be punished. But you must not take the law into your own hands, and punish them yourselves. You must also remember your duties towards your landlords, for I will suffer no infraction of the law under that head; landlord and tenant, noble and peasant, are all alike the children of the Emperor, whose wish is that you shall all live happily and contentedly together." The General then wished them a pleasant journey back to their homes, and they withdrew.

What struck me as remarkable in these peasants, as well as in the others that I sub-

sequently saw at the castle, where they had come with addresses to the Emperor, was, that they spoke out as calmly and boldly in the presence of the terrible Mouravieff and his staff of generals and court chamberlains, as a member of parliament would address the ministerial benches. Each seemed fully impressed with the importance of his position as a popular representative, chosen by the free voices of his fellow-citizens, to express their wishes to the governing powers.

Amongst the members of one of the deputations which arrived at the castle, whilst I was at Wilna, were twelve peasants who lived upon the crown lands. They wore the same form of costume as their companions, but it was of darker colour, and was bound with gold lace. With their low-crowned hats, ornamented with a peacock's feather, open shirt-collar, loose caftan, and long boots, they were exactly like the figures seen in a Polish *ballet* at Her Majesty's Theatre.

CHAPTER XI.

WERKEY.

At about five miles from Wilna is the country seat of Prince Seyne Wittgenstein, at present military agent for the Russian Government at Paris. Werkey is the name of the place. Every stranger who stops for any time at Wilna is expected to visit Werkey. I, consequently, determined to go thither, if I could get an escort to protect me from any disagreeable mistakes on the part of either Cossack or insurgent along the road. The landlord of the hotel, however, assured me that for leagues round Wilna the country was quiet and orderly. The coachman, he said, knew the road; and he gave me a note for his friend, the Prince's game-



keeper, who would show me the house and grounds.

We drove past the church of St. John, and by the public garden, across the open space in front of the cathedral, and in a few minutes more crossed the long, low, wooden bridge which spans the river. The ground, which rises rather abruptly on the other side, is crowned by a church, in front of which, and overlooking the road by which we ascended, is a gigantic figure of Our Saviour carrying the cross, which is held in particular veneration by the Catholics of Wilna. When we reached the table-land above the church, the view we obtained of the city and its environs was picturesquely beautiful. Wilna is built upon undulating ground; on each eminence is seen the sharply pointed red-tiled roof of some monastery, with its quaint belfry, blackened by time, rising solemnly behind, or an old clock tower, with its high pyramidal roof surmounted by its vane and cross. Here and there, in breaks amongst the houses, are seen waving acacias and slender poplars, their

green contrasting pleasantly with whitened wall, red-tiled roof, and sombre tower.

Below, on the level ground, flows the Vilia, a bright limpid river, now hidden by a rising ground or clump of trees, now flashing like burnished silver in the warm autumnal sun. On the bank of this river, opposite the town, is a hill which rises sharply high in the air, and on its summit is the citadel. Seen from the road to Werkey it stands apart, like a Greek acropolis; but the soft verdure, the terraced walks, and the mediæval outline of the fort itself, give it more the appearance of the stronghold of some feudal margrave.

After stopping for some time to admire the view which I have attempted to describe, we proceeded towards Werkey. At little more than half-way, we passed the residence of the Greek Archbishop of Wilna. It is a handsome pile of building, composed of the archiepiscopal palace, and a church, to which recent additions give something of a Byzantine character. This edifice, I believe, formerly belonged to the Catholics. It is beautifully



situated in the midst of handsome gardens, backed by a hill covered to the summit with trees. On the front side, the land falls in a gentle slope about a hundred yards to the river which here flows on, broad, and calm, and deep. Barges and rafts were gliding slowly along its surface, and on the opposite side were wide pastures dotted with cattle, and, beyond, a fringe of woodland fading away into the blue distance. After passing the Archbishop's residence, the road lies through dense woods for a mile or so, and then winds up the side of a steep hill, on the broad summit of which stands the chateau of Werkey. The well macadamised road, with a strong wooden paling on one side separating it from a dark ravine, through which, hidden by tangled brushwood, tumbles a noisy stream, the handsome gateway, the lodge, the gravelled avenue, the velvet lawn, and the white walls of the mansion peeping out from amongst the trees, made me for a moment fancy that I was in the grounds of one of our English noblemen.

CHAPTER XII.

THE HOUSE OF RADZOVILL.

THE Princes of Seyne Wittgenstein are of German origin. The first of the family established in Russia was the celebrated Field-Marshal, so often mentioned in the despatches of Napoleon I., during the memorable campaign of 1812. A son of the Marshal married the Princess Radzovill, heiress in her own right to the chateau and lands of Werkey, and the other possessions belonging to that branch of the great Lithuanian family. The present prince is the offspring of this marriage.

In the dining-hall of the chateau is a well-painted full-length portrait of the Marshal, and in the same room is another picture which does not possess so much artistic merit, repre-

senting the late prince and princess as a knight and lady of the middle ages on a hawking expedition, and the present prince appears as a little page holding a greyhound in a leash. Here is also a rudely-executed portrait of the beautiful Barbara Radzovill, who was married secretly to Sigismond Augustus, King of Poland, after the death of his first wife, an Archduchess of Austria. When Sigismond proclaimed to the nation his marriage with Barbara, the nobles, urged on by Sigismond's mother, demanded that the marriage should be annulled. But Sigismond loved his beautiful wife too dearly to act traitorously towards her, either for the frowns of his mother, or the threats of his nobles. "How can you expect your king to be faithful to you, if he is not faithful to his wife?" exclaimed Sigismond, addressing the nobles. He was willing to resign the crown, he said, but he would never abandon his beloved Barbara. Sigismond's chivalrous determination prevailed; the nobles acknowledged Barbara as their queen, vied with each other in showing

her their devotion, and even her mother-in-law became her friend. But poor Barbara's whole being was wrapped up in her love for Sigismond, and the attempt to tear him from her so affected her health that she pined away, and died six months after her mother-in-law and the nobles had demanded her divorce. More than three hundred years have gone by since Queen Barbara's death, but stories of her loveliness and worth, her sufferings and her early death, are still heard in the long winter evenings, round the stove of the Lithuanian peasant.

On the oaken panelling of the dining-hall are grouped trophies of antique arms, and standing around are suits of mail, with helm and lance and closed vizor, the grim iron shells of departed knights of the house of Radzovill.

In the other rooms are one or two paintings of merit, and there is a very good copy of Correggio's "Christ arguing with the doctors," the original of which is in the National Gallery in London.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE BISONS.

WE visited the preserves at Werkey, which are swarming with game, the grounds not having been shot over for a considerable time. Since the breaking out of the insurrection the prince's gamekeepers have not been allowed to carry guns.

In one part of the park where a clearing had been made in the centre of a plantation of fir-trees a cock was tied by a long string to a peg driven into the ground. Upon four upright posts a strong net was loosely hung, forming a square of about six feet about the place where the cock was attached. This net was for catching eagles and other birds of prey. Attracted by the crowing of the cock

they perch upon the branch of some neighbouring tree, and making a sudden swoop upon their intended victim, they are caught in the meshes of the net. The gamekeeper told me that several eagles, hawks, and vultures, had been captured in this manner. They were all found entangled close to the ground, none having ever darted vertically downwards, when they would have been sure of their prey, for the net is entirely open at the top.

In another part of the grounds were several hundred head of deer, who came trooping out from their leafy hiding-places at the call of the gamekeeper. But the most remarkable sight in the park was a family of bisons, consisting of a male and female and a young one. They were confined in a field surrounded by a high paling. They had a wooden shed in which to sleep, and their food was passed to them through a small door in the inclosure. They seemed very savage and irritable. They had been brought from a forest at several miles distant, where the bison is found wild. It is a



strange fact in natural history that, throughout the entire Russian empire, it is only within the precincts of this forest that the bisons live healthily, and continue to multiply. When removed, even to a little distance from their native haunts, they sicken and die in a short time. Several attempts have been made to acclimatize them at Werkey, but all without success. Those that I saw, though the food they were supposed to like best was given them in abundance, were unhealthy and suffering, the gamekeeper told me, and would evidently end as their predecessors had ended. In their native woods they are shy and timid, and fly at the approach of a passenger, but when shut up as they were at Werkey, they become fierce and dangerous.

CHAPTER XIV.

MEMORIES OF 1812.

It was late in the evening when I again found myself on the height above the wooden bridge which crosses the Vilia, at the entrance to Wilna. In the closing shades of evening I could no longer distinguish those features in the landscape which had excited my admiration some hours before. The town was wrapped in the sober livery of twilight, the busy hum of its population was growing gradually fainter, and the impatient rush of the river broke more distinctly upon the ear. It was the same Vilia upon the bank of which Napoleon I. had stood, at the head of a countless host, fifty-one years before. He was then in the neighbourhood of Kovno. The Cossacks had

destroyed the bridge, and prevented the passage of Oudinot's corps. Napoleon, in a moment of irritation, ordered a squadron of his Polish body-guard to ford the river. Obedient to the order, they at once plunged in, but the waters were deep and the current strong. They tried to swim their horses to the opposite bank, but in vain. Horses and men sunk and rose in a frightful struggle with death, and, when all hope was over and the Polish horsemen saw their fate inevitable, they turned their eyes towards Napoleon, who stood calm and motionless upon the bank, and, shouting with their remaining strength "*Vive l'Empereur!*" sunk to rise no more. The whole squadron perished. The French soldiers upon the bank, unable to render assistance, were struck with horror and admiration. The superstitious amongst them looked upon the incident as a bad omen, as they had already pronounced it to be an ominous warning when on the bank of the Niemen, not very many hours before, the horse of the emperor stumbled and fell, rolling his imperial rider in the dust. It was on the

day succeeding that latter accident that the first of the invading army stood upon the soil of Russia. On the evening of the 24th of June a party of sappers crossed the Niemen in a small boat. Arrived on the opposite bank, they were surprised to find themselves in complete solitude. After a time a Cossack officer, at the head of a few of his men, emerged from a neighbouring wood, and, riding towards the sappers, asked them who they were and what brought them to Russia. "We are Frenchmen," answered a sapper, "we have come to fight the Russian army, to take Wilna, and to deliver Poland;" upon which the Cossacks rode away, but as they were disappearing through the wood they were fired at by three of the sappers. Those were the first shots fired by the invading army in Russia.

CHAPTER XV.

BAD OMENS.

IF bad omens could have influenced the conduct of Napoleon I. when he appeared on the Russian frontier at the head of more than half a million of men, he would have hesitated before he embarked in that disastrous campaign. Napoleon advanced from Kovno to the neighbourhood of Wilna, hoping that the Russian army would have defended the capital of Lithuania. But such were not the tactics of the Czar. The Russian generals had determined to adopt the old Scythian system of drawing the invaders as far as possible into the interior of the country, and then leaving the chief work to be done by their best ally—the terrible northern winter.

The gates of Wilna were open wide, and Napoleon rode through its streets at the head of his Polish guard amidst enthusiastic shouts of welcome from the Lithuanian population. But he was insensible to the ovation; this absence of all resistance fell upon his mind as the first dark shadow of the coming disasters of the campaign. The Russian army had retired in the direction of Drissa. Napoleon ordered Murat and his cavalry to follow in their track, and Ney to move on his left to the support of Oudinot, who had that day come up with Wittgenstein and driven him with loss from Develtovo to Wilkomir. It was amongst his advanced posts to which he had ridden from Wilna, that he gave these orders. He then returned back into the town and took up his quarters in the palace, which had just been vacated by the Emperor Alexander, and which is at present occupied by General Mouravieff.

CHAPTER XVI.

NAPOLEON'S WRITING-TABLE.

IN the boudoir of Madame Mouravieff is a writing-table of moderate size. The frame is of rosewood, the centre is covered with green cloth, the edges of the table are bordered with gilt brass, and a light railing of the same material, of three inches high, runs along the back and comes half way down on each side. It was at this table that Napoleon I. wrote his despatches directing the operations of his generals for the conquest of Russia, and at this table he wrote his instructions to his ministers at Paris with regard to the policy to be pursued throughout Europe, of whose fate he then considered himself the sovereign arbitrator. A few days before taking up his quarters in



Wilna, he issued the following proclamation to his army :—

“Soldiers ! The second Polish war has commenced. The first ended at Friedland and Tilsit. At Tilsit, Russia swore to maintain an eternal alliance with France, and to wage war with England. She has violated her oaths and refuses to give any explanation of her strange conduct, until the French eagles have re-passed the Rhine and left our allies at her mercy. Russia is hurried along by fate—her destiny will be fulfilled. Does she think us degenerated ? Are we not the same soldiers that fought at Austerlitz ? She has placed us between dishonour and war. There can be no doubt as to our choice. Let us, then, advance ; let us pass the Niemen, and carry the war into her territory. The second Polish war will be glorious for the French arms, as was the first ; but the peace which we shall conclude will carry with it its guarantee : it will put an end to the fatal influence which Russia for fifty years has exercised upon the affairs of Europe.”

At the same time Alexander also issued an address to his army, and a French historian says, that in these two productions might have been seen the characters of the two emperors, and of the two peoples over which they ruled. The Russian proclamation was a defence ; the French was an accusation. The first was simple and moderate, the other defiant and in a tone prophetic of victory. Alexander invoked the aid of heaven ; Napoleon spoke only of fate. The former appealed to the love of home and country ; the latter to the love of glory and the pleasures of conquest. But neither one nor the other spoke of the independence of Poland, which Napoleon had, however, previously stated to be the real object of the war.

One of the Emperor Napoleon's despatches, dated Wilna, July 9th, 1812, is written with that certitude of success which it was natural should be felt by the master of an army of 600,000 men. Its tone contrasts strangely with a despatch written from the same town, and in the same palace, five months later.

Napoleon, writing from Wilna, 9th July, says:—

“Cousin, consider the last letter I wrote to you for the Duke of Tarento as *non-avenue*, and substitute for it the following:—

“The Duke de Reggio has received orders to advance upon Solok, the Duke d’Elchingen upon Kozatschizna; the King of Naples is at Widzy. The enemy appears to concentrate at Dunaburg. The Prince d’Echmuh has arrived at Minsk. The Hetman Platoff with his Cossacks, and the corps of Bragation who thought to move upon that town, have been cut off, and have gone towards Bobrinsk. They are pursued by the King of Westphalia; they were yesterday at Mir. The Viceroy is marching towards the Duna; the Guard and the head-quarters ought to leave this in a few days. The Emperor intends to march upon Moscow and St. Petersburg, and from thence force the army which is at Dünaburg to return up, and he will liberate the whole of Courland and Livonia.

“The garrison of Riga, commanded by

General Essen, whose army has been dismembered, is composed of thirty-three battalions, each consisting of two or three hundred men. They are all recruits of this year, and are not worthy of attention. It is possible that as soon as the place is threatened, a division from Dünaburg will march there, for, according to the information we have received, the present garrison is not sufficient for its defence," &c. &c.

Five months later the following order, dated Wilna, December 9th, was sent to Comte Daru :—

"The King has removed his head-quarters to the barrier of Kovno. The Duke d'Elchingen conducts the retreat, and will leave tomorrow as late as he can. Send off the treasure during the night. I have ordered General Eblé to give the horses of the artillery if it is necessary. Everything must be done to save it. Let it be brought to-night to the head-quarters at the barrier of Kovno, where we will have it escorted.

"Distribute, without any slow official forms,

and in abundance, provisions and clothing to all those who ask for them, as the position of the enemy forbids the hope of being able to hold out all day to-morrow at Wilna. Join the head-quarters to-night, and set everything going to evacuate upon Kovno, if that seems possible."

CHAPTER XVII.

FLIGHT FROM WILNA.

It was on that same 9th of December that a portion of the wreck of the mighty army, which Napoleon had assembled for the conquest of Russia, arrived half dead with cold and hunger in the streets of Wilna. There were in that town stores of flour, bread, and meat, sufficient to feed 100,000 men for more than a month; but such was the confusion and helplessness which existed, even amongst the chiefs, that no one thought of distributing these provisions amongst the unfortunate beings who had struggled on as far as Wilna, in the hope of there finding shelter and food. Some had crawled to the hospitals, and died upon the stairs and in the passages. The

doors of the barracks were blocked up with dead bodies heaped one upon the other. Thousands, weak from hunger and fatigue, sunk in the streets and were frozen to death. At length, after ten hours' delay, some relief was given to the survivors.

The Lithuanians from pity, and the Jews on payment, received them into their houses. But scarcely had they begun to feel the unwonted pleasure of heat and food, than the roar of the Russian artillery was heard at the gates of Wilna.

Again all was confusion. The drums beat to arms, but none, not even the soldiers of the Old Guard, answered the appeal. A cry had risen "the Cossacks are coming!" and all, veteran and recruit, officer and private, all who had strength, fled through the streets in wild disorder.

Murat himself, in the midst of the confusion, lost his presence of mind. He hurried out of the palace on foot, and was borne along by the reeling crowd till he reached the extremity of the suburbs on the road to Kovno. There he

stopped, till he found means of communicating with Ney. The marshal, who had volunteered to take charge of the rear-guard, retired from Wilna not many hours after, and a cloud of Cossacks under Platoff immediately swept down upon the town.

The treasure, consisting of 10,000,000 of francs in gold and silver, and the Emperor's baggage, had been pushed on in front of the 8,000 men with whom Ney tried to protect the retreat. But at about a league from Wilna all attempt at order was abandoned; and the flying crowd, seeing themselves closely pressed by the enemy, determined to anticipate the capture of the carriages bearing the treasure, by plundering them themselves. Not only the men of the escort, but those of the rear-guard, as they came up, threw down their arms, to join in the terrible and even sanguinary struggle which took place between French soldiers for the possession of a portion of the treasure or of the valuable effects of their Emperor. So absorbed were they by the thirst of plunder, that they took no heed

of the Cossacks, bodies of whom had already come up with the French. But they, too, at the sight of the gold and silver and the Emperor's costly baggage, forgot their work of slaughter in a desire for pillage.

Such was one of the last terrible episodes in the campaign of 1812, of which the neighbourhood of Wilna was the scene. Nearly 20,000 French, unable or unwilling to move—unable from their wounds, or unwilling in the reckless apathy of despair—were left behind in the capital of Lithuania, which was then little better than a vast charnel-house. Amongst the living men thus abandoned were 300 officers and seven generals.

As the above passages in the history of the terrible Russian campaign of 1812 recurred to my memory, I drove slowly across the bridge which crosses the Vilia, and through the silent streets of the town to my hotel. There were still the same houses from which the wounded French had been flung to be trampled under the hoofs of the charging Cossacks; there were the same streets that had been the scene of the

triumphant entry of the great Emperor, and that, a few months later, flowed with the blood of the panic-stricken wreck of his mighty army. Nearly a whole generation has passed away since then, but the dark pages of the world's history which record that dreadful war are still read, and will be read to the end of all time, with the same wonder and admiration, and the same shuddering horror, as when they were first written. And Napoleon himself, whose legions were commanded by kings and sovereign princes, whose relatives and whose favourites sat upon half the thrones of Europe, and who for a time seemed to hold in his hands the destinies of the world, died a helpless, broken-hearted exile on a rock in the midst of the ocean, with half the globe between him and the scenes of his glory.

CHAPTER XVIII.

REPENTANT INSURGENTS.

DURING my stay in Wilna, I was witness on several occasions to a solemn act of submission made by repentant insurgents. They were all Catholics, and gentlemen by birth. The ceremony on each occasion that I was present took place in the church of St. John. The ex-insurgents, on entering, went in a body within the railing which separates the great altar from the aisle. Here they knelt and joined in the prayers which were offered up by the officiating clergyman. The prayers over, the clergyman turned to a reading desk in the centre of the enclosure, on which stood a copy of the Holy Testament, open at the passage containing the words of our Saviour,

“Give to Cæsar what belongs to Cæsar, and give to God what belongs to God.”

Upon this text the clergyman preached in the following sense:—

He said that the Catholic Church had at all times exhorted the faithful, in countries where civil strife existed, to remember the words of our Divine Lord, which he had quoted. “We are bound,” he continued, “to obey those who rule over us, and to pray for their welfare, that we may lead a happy and peaceable life. It was said at the beginning of the insurrection, that it was, in a great measure, a struggle between the Catholic and the Greek faith. That assertion was made for the purpose of gaining the sympathies of a large party among the Poles, and also of the faithful in foreign countries. But, after a time, it was seen that the chief promoters of the insurrection were men without faith, and whose aim was, not only a war against the Emperor, but against all divine and social laws.”

“If the Church,” he continued, “con-

demned open rebellion, how much more strongly must it condemn the dreadful crime of murder, which, during the insurrection, had been so often perpetrated by the agents of the so-called 'National Government.' It was murder of the foulest and darkest kind, effected by paid assassins. This crime was committed, always in the name of their country, and often in the name of Heaven. The men who instigated others to the perpetration of these atrocities did not hesitate to brand with the foul and indelible stigma of assassin, the Polish name; and, in their impious daring, they invoked the name of Heaven as if Heaven were an accomplice of their wickedness. Horrors such as these are sufficient to bring down upon a people the anger of the Almighty."

"The Church," he said, "has at all times condemned secret societies; for it is crime which hides in darkness and secrecy, whilst what is pure and good fears not the light of day. No form of secret society is tolerated by the Catholic Church, and they who belong

to such societies have, by that act, brought upon themselves the penalty of excommunication."

"Let us humbly beseech the Almighty, that in His mercy he will turn aside his wrath from us and from our brethren."

"May your example be followed by all who are still openly, or covertly, opposed to the Government which has been set over us by Heaven. May your protest against violence and bloodshed, falsehood and assassination, be shared in by the entire Polish people, so that the Emperor may be able to put into execution his benevolent intentions towards our unfortunate nation. Let us humbly pray that all the horrors of this fratricidal strife may speedily come to an end, and that peace and good-will may again prevail in the land; and that the entire Polish people may feel that their only true friend here below is the Emperor Alexander; and that once, when they have entered into the path of duty, as you have done, that his Majesty, in the benevolence of his heart, will forget the past, and that he will then

bestow upon his Polish subjects those laws and institutions which will enable them to become contented, prosperous and happy."

The oath of allegiance to the Czar was then slowly read by the clergyman, and repeated, word for word, by the Polish gentlemen. Each of them then came forward in his turn, and kissed the Holy Testament at the place where the words of our Saviour, which I have quoted above, were printed, after which, they all set their names beneath the written copy of the oath which they had taken.

The organ of the church, which is a very splendid one, and celebrated throughout the country, then pealed forth a triumphant hymn. It imitates with wonderful effect a complete orchestra, with drums, loud twanging trumpets, and clashing cymbals. At the first harmonious outburst, I fancied that a large band of musicians was stationed in the choir, till I looked, and saw that the great resounding melody was the work of the solitary organist.

The crowd then began to stream slowly

through the aisles, and the Polish gentlemen who had subscribed to the oath of allegiance, having descended the steps of the altar, were embraced with tears of joy by their relatives and friends.

CHAPTER XIX.

STATE OF LITHUANIA.

I HAVE remarked at the beginning of these pages, that when I arrived from St. Petersburg at the Wilna station I found it as free from police regulations as the station at Windsor. On several occasions I rode alone and unattended over miles of country in the Wilna district. In my excursions I met with neither gendarme, nor soldier, nor Polish insurgent, and the inhabitants that I encountered in the villages or along the road were civil, and even kind whenever I had occasion to ask them for information about the way, or the places where I could obtain refreshment. On holidays and Sundays, I remarked that itinerant musicians

plied their trade, and that the peasantry danced and sang, and that there were all the other outward signs of rejoicing that mark the feast days in Russian villages.

On the St. Petersburg line, for several leagues before reaching Wilna, the stations were guarded by armed peasants, who had volunteered to perform that duty. Their offer was readily accepted by the local government, who supplied them with muskets and ammunition.

In the streets of Wilna, barrel organs and mountebanks were met with as in the streets of St. Petersburg, and the population were free to move about at every hour of the twenty-four. For the convenience of travellers arriving or starting by the different trains, the hotels were open all night, and carriages plied for hire between sunset and sunrise for the same charges, and with the same freedom, as during the day.

Deputations were constantly arriving at the "Château," with addresses to the Emperor Alexander, and solemn acts of submission in

the principal churches, by the Polish gentry who had taken part in the insurrection, were of equally frequent occurrence. The Catholic clergy preached in the pulpit against the revolt, and some of the dignitaries amongst them issued mandates to their flocks in favour of peace and order, and exhorting obedience to the laws of the Imperial Government.

The terrorism which the "National Government" attempted to exercise by means of assassination had entirely failed; and, whilst the news arrived from Warsaw by nearly every train, that murders were perpetrated in open day in the streets of that city, a passenger in the capital of Lithuania enjoyed the same security as if he traversed the streets of St. Petersburg. Persons who did not think proper, or to whom it was inconvenient, to comply with the childish edict of the "National Government," for adopting a sort of masquerading costume, were not insulted when they went abroad, and no threats were used against those Poles, lay or clerical, who openly protested against the insurrection, or who gave in their adhesion to

the Imperial Government. Lithuania, as far as I could see, was not only pacified, but a complete revulsion had taken place in the feelings of those who, either from religion, or race, or political feeling, had taken part in the insurrection.

I have reason to believe that this comparatively sudden change, from the wild excesses of civil war to the calm of ordinary life, was not entirely owing to the rigorous measures adopted by General Mouravieff. History shows us that no system of severity, short of a general extermination, can produce that result, where the rising is of an entire and united people. Armed resistance may be put down by superior force; the flames of rebellion may be extinguished; but, beneath the embers, the fire will still smoulder, to break out again with the same fury when fanned by the first breath of revolution.

It was not an army of 120,000 men, said General Mouravieff, that was necessary for the suppression of the insurrection, but a good administration. "It will be found on exami-

nation," he remarked to me on another occasion, "that less blood has been shed in Lithuania in restoring order, than has been shed in the kingdom of Poland up to the present time. My edicts," he continued, "were sternly worded, and it was known that I would act up to them if necessary ; but, in the Kingdom, the conciliatory tone of the Government was looked upon as a sign of weakness, which, encouraging the revolt, made the necessity for exemplary punishment more frequent. It was similar to a man caressing with one hand whilst he struck with the other."

It is probable that if the blood-stained columns were summed up, the result would prove that General Mouravieff's calculation was correct. But it is more than probable that it was not entirely the iron will of the Governor-General of Wilna, nor the excellence of his administrative powers, which brought the revolt in Lithuania to so speedy a termination ; it was rather this simple fact that the insurrection had never taken any deep root in that province.

It will be seen by statistical returns, that the great mass of the inhabitants of Lithuania are of the Eastern Church, and they are, consequently, by education and sentiment, as thoroughly Russian as the people of Moscow or Novogorod, especially the inhabitants of the eastern part of the province; whilst those who, from race, religion, or sympathy, entertained the idea of a Polish nationality, are in a minority, composed of some of the landed proprietors, the small gentry, and a portion of the tradespeople in the large towns.

The insurrection in Lithuania was, compared to that in the kingdom of Poland, merely superficial; it had no hold on the popular mind, and its only effect has been to weld that province more closely than ever with the Russian Empire, and to render, for the future, all hope of exciting revolt, in favour of a Polish national cause, in that part of the Czar's dominions, utterly desperate.

As an Englishman, living under a constitutional government. my sympathies would naturally be enlisted on the side of a people

struggling for their natural rights. But I saw from the beginning that the cause of the Polish nation was helpless, that it was an useless effusion of blood, a wanton courting of suffering and ruin. I knew that Poland had nothing to hope from foreign intervention. I knew from the best source that one of the Great Powers, upon whose aid she most fondly reckoned, had only the year before entered into negotiations with the Russian Government for the formation of an alliance, by which that Power offered to bind itself to aid the Czar in his domestic and foreign policy, provided the Emperor Alexander connived at certain projects of aggrandizement on the part of his ally. The same doubt which induced Russia to decline the proffered alliance subsequently cast its shadow over the cabinets of London and Vienna, and finally awakened something like fear in the minds of statesmen at Berlin. I knew that England would not, that France could not, and that Austria dare not give material assistance to Poland. To whom, then, were the Poles to

turn for help? They had nothing to expect from without, and they were too weak to carry on the struggle alone. Amidst the slaughter of insurgent bands, amidst the hangings and the shootings, not a single arm was stretched out in their defence. Sharp despatches, slashing articles, and eloquent harangues were made in their favour, and the effect of this was to awaken false hopes which encouraged them to resistance, and which widened the dark field of ruin and despair.

It is evident, then, that there is no earthly chance of safety for the Poles, but to give up the struggle and trust to the promises of the Emperor Alexander. It is not to be supposed that the sovereign could act ungenerously, who has given freedom to millions of his fellow-men, not as we gave freedom to our negro slaves when we released them from their owners, and then abandoned them to their own resources, but who, when he emancipated the serfs, gave them the means of living in comfort and independence. History offers no example of an action so noble, and it is

against reason to suppose that the sovereign, who has so acted, can look otherwise than with sorrow upon the sufferings which the Poles have, in a great measure, brought upon themselves; or that he can entertain any other wish than to see temperate laws, order, and contentment, take the place of military rule, and the horrors of civil war.

In quoting the above facts, I wished to show that there was no other alternative left to the Poles than to submit, and then trust to the generosity of the Emperor; and I hope in God, that by the time this work comes before the public, that the Polish nation will have seen that the advice is a sound one, and that their future prosperity, happiness, and freedom, will be best secured by placing faith in the words of the Czar.

CHAPTER XX.

WARSAW.

ON the third of September, at half-past four o'clock in the morning, I left Wilna for Warsaw. At the different stations along the line guards of soldiers were drawn up, and officers of every grade from general to ensign, all in full uniform, were standing about. Railway officials displayed an exuberance of zeal, and their badges of block-tin were unusually resplendent. Some wonderful Frenchman, connected with the mysterious company that had originally received the concession for this delectable line of railway, rushed madly up and down whenever the train stopped, shouting out hoarse words of command to the guards and engine-drivers; and, when they had worked

themselves into a perspiration, they jumped into their waggon, from which they emerged again at the next station to go through the same ceremony. Like all Frenchmen of their class now-a-days, they affected a military bearing and looked quite proud and happy as they hurried about, evidently under the impression that the spectators regarded them as great captains who were kindly showing the barbarous Russians how to manage a railway. Nothing inclines me more to a pleasant train of kindly thoughts than the contemplation of a Frenchman under such circumstances. His vanity is so harmless, and it makes the poor fellow so happy, that it would be a positive sin to do anything which could spoil his illusions.

The cause of all this holiday display and feverish excitement I did not learn till I reached the Warsaw station. There we were all hurried out of the train as quickly as possible and directed to enter the waiting-room, the doors of which were immediately locked. Our train at once moved on, and was soon succeeded by another, a special

one, in which were the Grand Duke Constantine and his suite.

The Grand Duke had been on a short visit to his brother, the Emperor Alexander, at St. Petersburg, for the purpose, it was said, of tendering his resignation as Viceroy of Poland. Through a window of the waiting-room I saw the Grand Duke descend from his carriage, and at the same moment the Grand Duchess with her children hurried forward to welcome him on his return. The platform was crowded with general officers in brilliant uniforms, who offered their respectful greetings to his Imperial Highness.

When the Grand Duke Constantine, the Grand Duchess and their children, had driven away surrounded by their escort, and the military crowd on the platform had dispersed, the railway officials turned their attention to myself and fellow-travellers.

At the door of the station I had given up my passport to a police officer, and I was now directed to proceed to a little office in the waiting-room to get a receipt for that

document. I mentioned who I was to the clerk, and he handed me a bit of lithographed paper, about two inches long and an inch wide, in which he had filled up in writing two vacant spaces, one with my name, the other with the date of my arrival. My baggage was then minutely searched, not for contraband goods, as I had last come from Wilna, but for incendiary documents, fire-arms, and infernal machines. Nothing of a prohibited nature was found, and I was allowed to re-arrange my effects as well as I could, and lock my portmanteau and travelling-bag.

I then sent a porter for a carriage to take me to the hotel, and, during his absence, which lasted about half an hour, a police officer that I had not seen before came and asked me if I had in my pockets any forbidden documents or any weapons. I answered in the negative; but he seemed to doubt what I said, for he proceeded to search me, but he found nothing to excite his attention except an old cigar case, which he regarded with a good deal of curiosity. It had been given to me, filled with

good Havanna cigars, as long ago as 1851, by one of the chiefs of the great organ of the Press at the close of a *tête-à-tête* dinner at his club. I had kept it through all these years as a memento of that pleasant dinner and of many agreeable hours which I had passed in the company of the donor. It was a good deal worn and weather-beaten. It had been with me all through Italy and Greece, on the Danube, and in the Crimea, and its contents had helped to solace me in many a weary ride through the wilds of Asia Minor, of Palestine, and Egypt, but it had never before excited the attention of a policeman.

“Why do you carry about with you so old a cigar case?” he asked. I answered that it was more valuable in my eyes than a new one, because it was a souvenir. He looked perplexed. He took out, one by one, the cigars which it contained, examined them, and then put them slowly back in their places. At length he returned me the cigar case, but with evident suspicions of its being an object sufficiently doubtful to deserve confiscation.

"What countryman are you?" he then asked.

"I am an Englishman," I answered.

"Are you quite sure," he inquired, "that you are not a Frenchman?"

"I am perfectly sure," I replied, "that I am not a Frenchman." Here the porter came up to say that the carriage I had asked for was arrived. I gave him my baggage, and was proceeding to follow him out, when a police officer at the door asked to see the receipt which had been given me for my passport. After he had looked at it for some time, he said it was not in order, and that I must go back and have it changed. I did as I was told; and when the clerk who had given me "the bit of paper" heard that it was not in order he smiled pleasantly, seemed to make some alterations with his pen, and handed it me back. But again the cautious Cerberus at the door found an error in the document, and said it must be rectified. I again appealed to my friend the clerk, who this time seemed thoroughly amused. He took the receipt between his finger and thumb, touched it with

his pen, and then told me, with a confident air, that it was quite correct. The man at the door again carefully scrutinized this wonderful receipt, which in all contained but three written words. This time, luckily, he seemed satisfied, and allowed me to pass out.

Near the carriage I found the police officer who had taken such an interest in my cigar case. I asked him if he were a Russian? he said no, that he was a Pole. "And are the other police officers," I said, "with whom I have spoken, Poles?" He replied that they were. It was for that very reason, possibly, I thought, that they were afflicted with the defect, so obnoxious to Talleyrand, of "*trop de zèle*."

I drove from the station to the wooden pontoon-bridge which crosses the Vistula from the suburb of Praga to the town of Warsaw. As we proceeded across at a moderate pace, I had an opportunity of admiring the appearance of the city from that point of view, which is, perhaps, one of the best. The most striking object was a huge pile of building crowning an eminence on my right hand.

The walls were covered with stucco, painted of a dull yellow colour, and entirely devoid of architectural beauty of any kind. Its massive dimensions, however, and its position on a height which rises perpendicularly from the level of the river, give it an imposing appearance. This was the zamek, or Royal Palace. By a winding road we ascended slowly from the river's banks till we came to the open place in front of the Vice-regal residence, on one side of which stands a very thin column of about fifty feet high, with an enormous capital of the composite order, on which is the statue of the Polish king, Sigismund III. So entirely out of proportion is the diameter of the shaft of the column with the size of the superstructure, that, at a distance, you might take the statue for an acrobat balancing himself on the end of a pole.

We turned to the right out of this open place, and drove along the "Regent Street" of Warsaw, which is called in French "the Faubourg de Cracovie." I was agreeably surprised at the animation of the scene. The

footpaths were thronged with pedestrians, and the carriage-way crowded with vehicles of every description. There was nothing to indicate to a superficial observer that the town was in a state of siege. The number of military was not greater than in the "Nefskoi Prospekt" at St. Petersburg, and the only feature which corresponded with what I had read of Warsaw in the newspapers, was that the men all wore caps or wide-awake hats, and that the women were dressed in black. About ten minutes' driving from the zamek brought me to the *Hôtel de l'Europe*.

It was a large, oblong block, four stories high, with two entrances, one through a courtyard in the "Faubourg de Cracovie," and the other, and principal one in the immense *platz*, which runs from the latter street to the Saxon Gardens. This hotel was built by subscription, and is conducted something on the principle of the *Hôtel du Louvre* at Paris, each floor being a sort of separate establishment under the care of a superintendent. The prices were moderate, but the

rent of the apartments was arranged in what seemed to me an original manner.

The sleeping-rooms on the first floor contained each two or more beds, and you were charged in the bill according to the number. The waiter assured me that no person of condition ever thought of sleeping in anything under a double-bedded room at least, and that a traveller's social position was known by the number of beds in his apartment, just as the rank of a mandarin is known by his buttons. Not being ambitious, I fixed upon a room with two beds, agreeing to pay for both, as if I had been, not "two single gentlemen rolled into one," but like Mrs. Malaprop's Cerberus, "two gentlemen at once."

"You have an English lord for a neighbour," said the waiter.

"And how many beds does he pay for?" I asked.

"He pays for seven," said the waiter, with a look of pride, "a British peer could not pay for less. He is a great man," continued the waiter, "he has promised the Polish patriots

to send an English army to their assistance if they will only hold out against the Russians a little longer. He is brave, too: he would not salute the Grand Duke and the Grand Duchess when they drove past him in the street the other day."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE CONSUL-GENERAL.

EARLY the next morning I received a visit from Colonel Annenkoff, aide-de-camp to the Emperor, and employed on special service in Poland. Though aide-de-camp to His Imperial Majesty, and a colonel, M. Annenkoff is little more than twenty-seven years of age. He owes his rapid advancement, however, entirely to his own merit. Though heir to a handsome fortune, he worked as hard, when a pupil in the *Ecole des pages*, as if he were to be entirely dependent upon his profession, and carried off the first prize at his examination. Though young and wealthy, he resisted the temptation of joining one of those brilliant cavalry regiments always quartered in the neighbourhood of the court, and preferred entering amongst

the hard-working officers of the Russian staff, of which he is one of the most promising members. He speaks English fluently, has been a good deal in London, and is honorary member of one of our military clubs.

He told me that he was directed by Count de Berg to let me know that his Excellency received the letters which I had sent him the evening before, and that he would be glad to see me if I called at the palace that afternoon.

After speaking to me for some time in that frank, honest, and ingenuous way on the Polish question, which I have always remarked in him, Colonel Annenkoff took his leave, promising to return and accompany me to Count Berg at the hour appointed for my reception.

Shortly after his departure, Colonel Stanton, the British Consul-General, at whose house I had left, the night before, a letter, addressed to him by Lord Napier, called and invited me to dine with him on the following day. On hearing that I was going to see Count Berg, he bid me tell his Excellency that he would be happy to present me to the Grand Duke Constantine.

Colonel Stanton is an officer of engineers. He has been through the Crimean war, and was one of the Commissioners appointed by the British Government to determine the line of frontier at Bolgrad in Bessarabia—about which a misunderstanding had arisen after the congress of Paris. His manner and appearance are exceedingly good, and when in uniform, as I had the pleasure of seeing him a few days afterwards at a *levée* at the palace, he looked in every way a worthy representative of the officers of the British army.

He told me that the Polish society of Warsaw was very much irritated against me, because they fancied that I was the author of some letters, dated from Wilna, which had appeared in *The Morning Herald*.

I gave him my word that I was not the author of the letters he mentioned, and that I had never written a word in *The Morning Herald*, or in any other newspaper, on the Polish question. I did this, not that I supposed for an instant that Colonel Stanton shared in the idea of his Polish friends with

regard to me, but simply that he might be in a position to contradict the statement if again made in his presence. The author of the letters, I said, I believed to be a person who had been in Wilna at the same time as myself, and who subsequently went back to St. Petersburg.

I have never seen these letters, and, therefore, can form no judgment upon their merits, except from the reports of others. But whether they be good or bad, abusive, or in praise of England, provoking to bloodshed, or exhorting to peace, I positively object to having thrust upon me the responsibility of writings to which I am a total stranger.

These writings attracted no public attention in England, for the reason, possibly, that they bore the mark, as all such writings do, of being written to order, and not according to matured judgment and honest conviction. With regard to the effect which such productions have upon the public mind, they may take literary rank with the advertisements of cheap tailors, like Moses and Son.

It is strange that since the breaking out of

the Insurrection in Poland, every Englishman who visited the country was supposed to be the correspondent of London newspapers. I lay under the suspicion of the general public for several weeks of being the correspondent of one or other of the great London journals.

It is not a pleasant thing to be thought a newspaper correspondent in a town in a state of siege. People, wherever you happen to go, scowl or look pleasant, are friendly or ferocious, according as their views coincide with, or differ from, those of the paper by which you are supposed to be employed. In any assembly that you enter, all confidential conversation amongst those present ceases at once, as if you were a member of the secret police, come to report the words and actions of the company. Every one with whom you come into contact plays a part. There is either an exaggerated cordiality or a stern reserve; a wish to cajole you into good nature, or to make you ashamed of the iniquity of our ways.

The newspaper correspondent in most countries is looked upon as a literary detective, who is thought to be very useful by some, or very disagreeable by others, but whose occupation is not considered by any to be quite as venerable as that of a bishop, or as distinguished as that of a Lord High Chancellor.

In Warsaw the correspondent was in this peculiar position, that if suspected of abetting the Insurrection, he was ordered out of the country by the police, and if he wrote against the National Government, he ran the risk of being murdered. A writer in a London journal left the kingdom of Poland by direction of the Russian authorities, and joined his family in Moscow. A writer in the *Komunaly** was murdered by order of the National Government, and sent into eternity. The first still continues his arguments in favour of the Insurrection from a distance—the latter is silenced for ever.

* Miniszewski.

CHAPTER XXII.

COUNT DE BERG.

I FOUND Count de Berg lodged in the Royal Palace, in apartments adjoining those of the Grand Duke Constantine. The contrast between* General Moravieff and Count de Berg in appearance and manner is most striking. The Governor-General of Lithuania is inclined to obesity, is short of stature, and is lame from a wound received in the leg when a youth at the battle of Borodino. His features coincide with the popular idea in the west of Europe of a Russian face—high cheek bones, a *nez retroussé*, and small sharp eyes. The expression of his face is stern, his voice is deep-toned and dissonant, and his manner is trenchant and abrupt, like that of

a man accustomed to command and to be obeyed.

Count de Berg is seventy-three years of age, but looks twenty years younger. He is tall and slight, and full of nervous activity. His features are regular, and when a young man he must have been remarkably good-looking. His voice is soft and sympathetic, and his general tone and bearing have all the well-bred animation and graceful cheerfulness of the grand seigneurs of the old school—a type now rarely met with except in some of the aristocratic saloons of the Faubourg St. Germain.

His career has been most eventful as well as unceasingly active. When a youth he was present at the different battles which took place between the troops of Napoleon I. and the Russian army in the retreat from Moscow. He entered Paris with the allied armies, and was employed in several important missions during the occupation. After the peace he was sent on a scientific expedition to the wild country bordering the Caspian Sea, to

discover if a safe communication could be opened between that part of the Russian Empire and India. He was for some years employed in the diplomatic service in Italy, and was afterwards attached to the Russian Embassy at Constantinople as military agent. In 1831, during the period of the Polish Revolution, he was chief of the staff of the Russian army, and was employed to negotiate with the Polish generals during the siege of Warsaw. Subsequently, during ten years, he occupied a high command in Poland.

On the breaking out of the Crimean war he was appointed by the Emperor Nicholas Governor General of Finland, with a large army under his orders for its protection from invasion. During his vice-royalty in Finland, he did much for the improvement of that province. He drained lakes, cut canals, constructed roads, protected commerce, and was untiring in his efforts to improve the condition of the labouring classes.

About a twelve-month since, he was sent to Warsaw to act conjointly with the Grand

Duke Constantine in the government of the Polish kingdom, and when his Imperial Highness retired from his post in last September, Count de Berg was appointed by the Emperor to be the Grand Duke's successor.

Count de Berg is a Protestant, but his wife, who is an Italian of a noble Lombard house, is a Catholic. Count de Berg has been, during his life, a good deal in England, for which country he has a strong partiality. His daughter he placed for her education in a Catholic convent at Roehampton, near London.

During several months I saw a great deal of Count de Berg, and had ample opportunities of judging of his character. He is eminently religious—religious after the manner of the knights of old, who feared God and honoured the sovereign, and with whom fidelity to the crown was an article of faith. His private life is as pure and almost as austere as that of an anchorite. All day long and the greater part of the night he is unceasingly busy with the never-ending toil

of his office. He does not go to bed till long after midnight, and rises at six in the morning.

Though unbounded in his hospitality, he himself takes but one hurried meal in the day, and is as abstemious with regard to wine as if he were a disciple of Father Mathew. It is, perhaps, owing to this abstemious life which he has led for years, that he owes the youthful freshness of his character, and that marvellous intellectual and physical energy which would be remarkable even in the prime of manhood.

It may be easily supposed that the Viceroy of Poland does not lie upon a bed of roses. For him there is no hour of quiet cheerfulness. From his rising to his lying down he hears of nothing but courts-martial, inquiries, executions, assassinations, murders, sorrow, and ruin. And in the midst of this are the rival ambitions, the jealousies, the intrigues, and the treasons to be found in every court, great and small.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

It has been an old custom at the Viceregal court of Warsaw, that a secretary or the aide-de-camp on duty should each night read to the lieutenant of the Emperor extracts from the principal papers of Europe, commenting on the affairs of Poland. I have been present at some of these readings, which, in general, consisted of the most savage abuse of Count de Berg himself, and that often in a style of Billingsgate which would make even a transatlantic journalist hide his diminished head. Then there were astounding recitals of events said to have taken place at our own doors—of women dishonoured, others beaten with the knout, of churches desecrated, of lawless

bloodshed and revolting tortures—all asserted to have been perpetrated by order of Count de Berg. At first I listened with terror whilst these falsehoods and that wild abuse were being read to the lieutenant of the Emperor, lest his anger should be excited and prompt him to acts of needless severity. But he listened throughout with the calm of a well-disciplined mind, which made me inwardly thank Heaven that it was he, and not some violent and headstrong man that had been sent to govern unhappy Poland.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE GRAND DUKE CONSTANTINE.

It was at his Sunday morning levée that I had the honour of being presented to the Grand Duke Constantine. His Imperial Highness shook hands with me and invited me to follow him into his private study. When the door was closed he sat down at a small table in the centre of the room, and told me to take a chair near him.

The Grand Duke Constantine is in the prime of life, is of middle stature, with a well-formed head and delicate and expressive features. He speaks English fluently and with a certain elegance, and has the staid and quiet manner of a high-bred gentleman. With remarkable lucidity and a certain eloquence,

he sketched the most remarkable events in the history of Poland, from the time of the annexation of that country to Russia, down to his appointment as Viceroy of the kingdom.

“I came here,” the Grand Duke said, “to try if, by ample concessions and a kind and conciliatory policy, I could not establish order and quiet in Poland. I had full powers to carry into effect my plans for reforming whatever abuses existed in the country, and for convincing the Poles by acts that our sole desire was to see the country prosperous and happy. We wished to secure a good local government to the Poles, to place in their own hands the administration of laws framed by themselves, to place natives of the kingdom in every post of trust and honour, to establish civil and religious liberty, to make all men equal before the law, and to deal out impartial and even-handed justice to all classes of the community. The Emperor thought that in sending me, his brother, to carry his benevolent intentions into effect, he was giving a pledge to the Poles of the sincerity of his wishes for their welfare.

That I came as the representative of conciliation with the power and with the firm intention to redress every real grievance of which the Poles complained, and to grant every legitimate demand which they had addressed to the Russian Government, was known to the whole world. I arrived here with my wife and children, full of confidence in the good sense, the loyalty, and the honour of a Christian and civilized people. Strong in these sentiments, I went, not very many hours after my arrival, to the theatre. On coming out a man advanced towards me, and, thinking he had some request to make, I bent down to listen. He had placed the muzzle of a revolver against my breast, but through my bending forwards the weapon glanced upwards, and, when he fired, the ball instead of entering my heart wounded me in the shoulder.

"Here," continued the Grand Duke, "are the clothes which I wore on that night, and here is the revolver with which the assassin fired, and here is a dagger with which he was also armed."

The Grand Duke's valet, an old man, had brought in the clothes ; the revolver and dagger were lying on a side table.

There, true enough, was the uniform coat, the breast just over the heart pierced by the ball and burnt by the flame, and there was the epaulette rent and blackened by the shot. The shirt, too, which he wore was there—it was torn by the bullet and stained with blood. The revolver was of the largest size, and the dagger was of the same kind as those now familiar to Europe as the daggers of the Polish assassins.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE GRAND DUCHESS.

WHILST I was looking with horror at the objects before me, the Grand Duchess entered the room. Her Imperial Highness is generally considered as one of the most beautiful women in Europe, and she fully deserves the title. Her figure is tall, lithe, and graceful. Her complexion is of transparent fairness, with a faint changing blush on the rounded cheek. Her eyes are large, dark, and luminous, the nose slightly aquiline, sufficiently so to give an air of command when the features are in repose. But there is an expression of settled melancholy in the lines of the mouth, as if the full and slightly parted lips had long been unused to smile.

After Her Imperial Highness had honoured me by saying that she was glad to see me in Warsaw, she sat down beside the Grand Duke, by whom I was invited to resume my chair.

“Had I known,” said the Grand Duchess, “that my husband ran any danger in going to the theatre I would have gone with him, and sheltered him from the assassin. But who could suppose that there were people in the world so wicked as to wish to murder one who not only had never done them any harm, but who had come amongst them to do them good? On the day of our arrival from St. Petersburg the assassin was waiting at the station to murder my husband, but he deferred making the attempt because I and the children were present. Since then I am never happy when the Grand Duke goes abroad without me, who would shield him from danger.”

“Yes,” said the Grand Duke with emotion, “she is a brave and devoted wife.”

The Grand Duchess turned away her head, but I saw that she was weeping.

“ I am now going away from Poland,” said the Grand Duke, “ because my presence here would be an anomaly. I came to Warsaw as the representative of a conciliatory policy; that policy has signally failed, another system is about to be introduced, and it must naturally be put into execution under another chief.”

CHAPTER XXVI.

ASSASSINATION AND THE CATHOLIC
CHURCH.

THAT evening I dined with Colonel Stanton. Before dinner was announced, I spoke privately to the Consul-General of the coming events in Poland, and I told him of the measures which the Russian Government intended to adopt, and I begged of him, in the name of humanity, to do what he could to avert the coming storm. I asked him, as he had a cypher, to telegraph to Lord Russell, so that his lordship might let those chiefs of the Polish Insurrection who resided in London know how hopeless was their cause, and how terrible were the calamities which they were bringing upon their unfortunate country.

During dinner the conversation turned upon assassination. The Vice-Consul was surprised to find that I looked upon assassination as a crime. He said that he was a Catholic, and that he knew that the Catholic clergy at home approved of assassination under certain circumstances; and that in Ireland they preached it openly to their flocks. I made no reply, as I presumed that the Consul-General and the Vice-Consul had official information on the subject. It is for Cardinal Wiseman and Archbishop Cullen to admit or to deny the assertion made, uncontradicted, at the table of Her Britannic Majesty's representative in Warsaw.

I was not aware till then that there was any known religion which sanctified murder, with the exception of that of the Thugs of India, but I hope that I may safely assert that the Catholic Church does not authorize its clergy to preach murder in any country, even in Poland.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A SOIRÉE AT THE VICEREGAL COURT.

AFTER dinner I went to a *soirée* given by the Grand Duchess. The state apartments were filled by a brilliant crowd, but all looked more or less sad and thoughtful. The Grand Duke and Grand Duchess had announced their departure for the Tuesday following, and this had thrown a gloom over the company.

When the Grand Duchess was retiring she told me not to forget that I was to call upon her next morning.

When I came at the hour appointed, Her Imperial Highness was at luncheon with her children.

I have seen few things more touching than the love which unites all the members of this

family together—a love evidently made all the deeper and the more binding by the terrible scenes amidst which for many a weary month they had been living.

“You will be surprised when I tell you,” the Grand Duchess said, “that I leave this place with the greatest regret. It is a general idea that we are only attached to places where we have been happy, but yet this palace is dear to me, though it is here that I have first known real sorrow. It was here, in this room, that I received my wounded husband the night the attempt was made upon his life. He had changed his dress and mastered the pain of his wound, and also his weakness from loss of blood, so that I might not be alarmed; for the doctor thought that in my then state of health any violent shock might have a fatal effect.

“After the Grand Duke had gone to the theatre and I sat here alone, I felt a sudden presentiment that I was threatened with some terrible calamity. When he returned and entered this room, my joy was unbounded. I asked him if nothing had happened to him

whilst he was away. He tried to re-assure me by evading an answer; but I knew by the paleness of his face that he had been wounded.

"It was here, in this room, that he told me of the assassin's attempt and his miraculous escape. It was here, often and often when the Grand Duke was absent, that, my children kneeling by me, I prayed to God to save their father's life. God heard the prayers that came from those little innocent hearts.

"Every object around me is associated in my mind with some bitter sorrow, or some deceptive gleam of joy. And yet my affections cling to them, just as bright sunny plants grow near graves and twine themselves fondly round some memorial of grief.

"My old nurse," continued the Grand Duchess, "has never left me since I was born. She came with me to Russia from our quiet home in Germany. She watches over me as if I were her life. Sometimes, when I am alone and unhappy, she tries to comfort me by talking as she used to talk to me long ago, as if

I were still a little child. At the time that an attempt was made to poison the Marquis Willopolsky, she came to me and said, "You must not eat any of that cake which has been sent up with your tea, it does not look nice, it may make you ill."

Her Imperial Highness was struck by the words of her nurse, as on that very day the Grand Duke had received information from the police, that a man known to them as an agent of the National Government was employed in the viceregal kitchen. The nurse was not aware of this; her warning was the result of affection for her foster-child; but the Grand Duchess, conscious that there might be danger, took the necessary precautions that no one should eat of the cake. This is one of the almost hourly-recurring incidents of torturing anxiety for the safety of her husband and children which the Grand Duchess had to suffer during her residence at Warsaw.

At the close of my audience, the Grand Duchess said "I am superstitious. Look at me and tell me if you feel that you shall soon

see me again." I said I hoped that I should. It does not seem very probable, however, that I shall again see her Imperial Highness in this world. The sufferings she went through in Warsaw have gradually undermined her health, and whilst I write she is dying of a lingering consumption. Her little court at Warsaw was broken up at her departure, and its members went their different ways through the world; but there will be aching hearts among them when they hear that the earth is about to close for ever over her that they loved so well.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE CITADEL OF WARSAW.

I HAVE visited the prisons and hospitals of Warsaw, where political offenders are confined. On my first visit to the citadel I went round the ramparts, accompanied by the Governor, who is an old veteran general officer. This fortress covers a large extent of ground. Within the walls, there is quite a good-sized town. The ground on which the citadel is built is on a level with the street called the Faubourg de Cracovie. The position is not a commanding one, except from the approaches by the river.

The style of the fortifications is the ordinary one of drawbridges, double moats, curtains and casemates, earthen bastions, &c.; the whole kept perfectly clean and in good repair. The

cannon and mortars are almost mediæval in the primitiveness of their construction, and would be utterly useless in presence of our new artillery.

A most beautiful view of the town and river is to be had from one of the angles of the fortification.

The first prison which I visited within the walls of the fortress was that devoted to the poorer class of insurgents. Most of them had been captured with arms in their hands, when forming the rank and file of the Polish bands. Some of them to whom I spoke told me that when taken they were in the most abject misery—nearly dead from hunger and with their clothes in rags. The clothes which they had on when I spoke to them were coarse but comfortable. They had been given to them; the prisoners told me, by the Russian authorities. I asked them if they were supplied with good and sufficient food. They answered that they generally got more than they could eat; and, in proof of what they said, several showed me the remains of their last meal,

which they had put aside. The rooms in which they were confined were of large size and might more properly be called halls than rooms. The beds were laid on the floor round the walls. They were rolled up in the daytime, and spread out at night by the prisoners themselves.

It must be remembered that all these prisoners belonged to the labouring classes, though, in general, they claimed to be "noblemen." One youth to whom I spoke told me that he was "noble." His father, he said, was a hackney coachman, but he also was noble by descent, and enjoyed the privileges accorded by the law to his rank. None of these prisoners were either ragged or dirty, thanks to the Russian officials, who supplied them with the necessary raiment and who enforced habits of cleanliness.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE PRISON DIET.

I VISITED the kitchen where the food is prepared for these prisoners. It was spacious and well kept. It was close to the hour for dinner, and pots and saucepans were simmering merrily over the fire. I asked to taste the contents of some which I pointed out, and found them very good and palatable. Soup, meat, and vegetables were supplied to each prisoner. My friend, who was with me, felt hungry after his walk round the ramparts, and had, at my request, a full ration supplied to him, in one of the rooms adjoining the kitchen. Had we been at our hotel, he would have asked for the daintiest dishes that the *chef-de-cuisine* could furnish ; he, however, consumed with evident

satisfaction to his inward man, the whole of his ration of soup, meat, vegetables, and bread.

A part of the citadel, known as the Sixth Pavilion, is of a dark and terrible interest to the people of Warsaw. Numberless are the stories told in frightened whispers of the sombre dramas which have been enacted within its walls in former times. It was with the same awe that I crossed its threshold, as I had felt in Venice when crossing the *Ponte Sospiri*. I felt my blood chilled as I walked through its long silent corridors, till I reached the point from which I intended commencing my visits to the different cells.

CHAPTER XXX.

FEMALE PRISONERS.

THE first into which I entered I found inhabited by a lady of perhaps twenty-six or twenty-seven years of age. She was pretty, and was very neatly dressed in mourning. Her auburn-coloured hair was as carefully arranged *à la Marie Stuart* as if she were seated in her own drawing-room expecting some morning calls. On a chair was lying open a morocco dressing-bag, evidently of English manufacture, filled with the usual silver-mounted articles.

I apologized to her for presuming to come into her room. I said that I did not do so from simple curiosity, but from a desire of

being of service to her in any way that I could.

In reply to a question of mine, she said that she had entered Poland with written communications for some of the insurgent chiefs, sewed in the lining of her dress. She was suspected, was searched, the correspondence was found, and she was sent a prisoner to Warsaw.

We had hitherto been conversing in French, when I suddenly saw several Tauchnitz editions of English books lying on her table. One which was open, as if she had just laid it down, was "Aurora Floyd." I then spoke to her in English, at which she seemed surprised and displeased. I pointed to her books which were all English, and I said it was that which made me suppose either that she was an Englishwoman, or that she spoke our language.

She told me her story. May Heaven help her, and all of her sex in whom sentiment is stronger than reason! At the present time I know that she is well, and I hope that she is happy.

The next cell into which I entered was of a larger size, and, it seemed to me, more sparingly furnished. The light came through a square strongly-barred window, fixed high in the wall, and the rays of the sun fell aslant the room, leaving that side where was the window in shadow. At first I thought the place uninhabited, and looked with astonishment at a series of cartoons which covered the walls from floor to ceiling. They were done in charcoal, but it was evident that they had been executed by the hand of a master. The subjects were strange and fantastic, and might have served to illustrate some wild Teutonic legend.

Whilst lost in surprise at the style of the drawings on the walls, I heard a low sigh close behind me. I turned, and saw, in the shadowed side of the room, a young girl standing beside a bed. As I moved towards her, to ask pardon for my intrusion, I observed that she became red and pale by turns, and trembled violently as if she were in great fear. She was a murderess! Incited to the crime

by others, she thought herself a second Judith, with beauty to win and courage to strike, and that the act was sanctioned by Heaven, as was that of the Jewish girl.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE MALE PRISONERS.

THERE is a large room in that Sixth Pavilion in which I found some fifty prisoners. They were all gentlemen, and several of them were rich landed proprietors.

They told me that the food supplied to them was good, and more than abundant, and that, moreover, those who pleased were allowed to purchase wines, brandy, tobacco, and any luxury in eating or drinking they thought proper.

They were, moreover, free to receive any number of books they wished, provided they contained nothing of an incendiary nature relating to the Polish question. One of the books which I found in the hands of a young

gentleman was Guizot's Life of Cromwell. I mention this to show that there was a fair latitude allowed with regard to works of a politico-historical nature.

I visited all the prisoners in solitary confinement, as well as those who were two or three together in each cell. Where a prisoner had one or more companions, he always looked calm if not cheerful, but those who were alone had generally a vague, anxious look, but not that indescribable expression seen in those wretched beings condemned to solitary confinement in some of the gaols in England. This I attribute chiefly to the free supply of entertaining and instructive books allowed in the political prisons in Poland.

CHAPTER XXXII.

TORTURE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS.

DURING the entire time that I remained in Poland, I resorted to every means within my reach to discover if there were any truth in the stories which have appeared in almost every paper in England, from the *Times* down to the *Halfpenny Journal*, of political prisoners having been tortured by the Russians.

I here protest solemnly that no case of the kind has ever come to my knowledge. Several gentlemen, whose acquaintance I made in the political prisons in Poland, and chiefly in the citadel of Warsaw, are now free, and are willing to declare, if called upon, that not only have they never been tortured in any way themselves, but that they did not know of a

single one of their friends or acquaintances having so suffered. The persons to whom I allude are men of title and fortune, to whom the happiness of Poland is as dear as it is to Prince Czartorisky or any of his companions in the National Government, but who protest against the name of Pole becoming synonymous with that of liar and assassin.

Nearly all these gentlemen have written to me on the subject of the treatment which they received from the Russian officials during their imprisonment, and these letters have been shown to those whose duty it is to obtain truthful information of what is passing in Poland.

In the hospitals for the wounded and sick Polish prisoners in this country, the order and cleanliness were excellent, and the medical attendance unexceptional; the pharmaceutical laboratory in the citadel of Warsaw is well worthy the visit of scientific men. The director is a German professor of distinguished ability. The retorts, the crucibles, and all the multi-

farious apparatus, are of the most improved kind, and are kept in a state of delicate neatness, which would delight the heart of the most scrupulous analyser.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ATTEMPT TO MURDER COUNT DE BERG.

A FEW days after the departure of the Grand Duke Constantine I was dining in company with the brother-in-law of the Marquis Willopolsky, and some other Polish gentlemen, when the news was brought to us that an attempt had been made on the life of Count de Berg. I had been then but a very short time in Warsaw, and refused to give credit to such extraordinary intelligence. Not so my companions. They knew what they call the "red party," namely, that of the National Government, better.

The landed proprietors, as they have often since told me, were aware that the idea of the foreign revolutionists, once that they had esta-

blished their influence in Poland, was to keep perpetually renewed a barrier of blood between Poles and Russians. Their hope was that the latter would be thus maddened into frenzy, and driven into sanguinary excesses—like those of the Turks in Scio and Damascus, and the Sepoys in India. Poland was to be sacrificed; and they, the landed proprietors, who had everything to lose, would naturally be the first victims. Burning, pillage, and massacre were hoped for, even the extermination of an entire people, if it could only bring about a general war in which it was thought the anti-religious and anti-social element would be sure to gain the ascendant. It was this knowledge which caused the panic amongst my companions.

General Luders, whilst walking in the Saxon garden, was attacked by assassins, and carried home it was thought mortally wounded. He was succeeded as Viceroy of Poland by the Grand Duke Constantine, whose murder, as I have already related, was attempted not many hours after his arrival in Warsaw. And the life of Count de Berg, the present lieutenant

of the Emperor, was only saved by a sort of miracle from the assassins of the National Government.

The intervals between these events were filled up by almost daily murders in the streets, the *cafés*, and the hotels and private houses of Warsaw, as well as in the towns and villages throughout the kingdom.

It was supposed by Czartorisky, Mazzini, Kossuth, &c. that the murder of Count de Berg would cause the cup to overflow, and that at length the long wished-for massacre of the Poles by the Russian soldiery would take place, and that the indignant "peoples" of Europe would rise at the call of their natural leaders, and that the war of democracy against kings, priests, and statesmen, would rage from the Nile to the Neva, and from the remote east to the shores of Ireland, for the Emerald Isle had an important part allotted to her in the projected drama.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE PANIC.

As I have already said, my companions on the day of the attack on the life of Count de Berg were seized with a panic, and fled. It was a little after 5 o'clock, on a beautiful autumn evening. Surprised and bewildered I went out into the streets. At that hour and at that season they are generally thronged with people. Every door and window was closed, and the streets and squares through which I passed were as silent and deserted as if the city were stricken with the plague.

Unable to obtain any details, but seeing from the appearance of the town that it must be true that Count de Berg had been attacked by the assassins of the National Government, I

hurried away to the royal palace. There was the usual guard on the staircase, but there was no one in the ante-room where the aides-de-camp wait. My heart sunk within me ; I was afraid the Count had been killed. I heard voices in the next room, and forgetting all etiquette I pulled open the door, and to my great delight beheld his Excellency, looking hale and uninjured, seated at dinner surrounded by his staff.

The meal was soon over, and we all accompanied Count de Berg to his study, where coffee is usually served.

We had scarcely entered, when news was brought that the soldiers who had been directed to take possession of Zamoyiski House had begun to throw the furniture out of the windows. Count de Berg was, as it may be supposed, exceedingly angry when he received this intelligence, and at once despatched Colonel Annenkoff to prevent any further destruction of property, and to order that the severest military discipline should be observed amongst the soldiers occupying the house where the attempted assassination had taken place.

Count de Berg knew well what were the ulterior hopes of the revolutionary party in ordering an attempt to be made upon his life, and therefore it was that he was so grieved that anything which could be made to look like a disposition to lawless retribution should have been shown by the soldiery.

Later that night, I went with Colonel Annenkoff to Zamoyski House. The orders of Count de Berg had been obeyed, and a noiseless quiet reigned throughout the vast building. We passed the sentries and moved along amongst the sleeping soldiers, stretched on the floors in the corridors and saloons. Almost all the windows in the front of the house were broken ; and here and there in the rooms was to be seen the wreck of what had once been a handsome piece of furniture. The remains of the articles which had been flung through the windows were, before our arrival, collected in a heap near the statue of Copernicus and burnt. The panic amongst the upper classes, caused by the attack on the life of Count de Berg, continued for several days, and did not

entirely cease till they were convinced by experience that the line of conduct which his Excellency intended to pursue was one of impartial justice, but always, when occasion offered, tempered by mercy.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE MONASTERIES.

WHEN the cold weather came on, the Russian soldiers, who during the summer had lived chiefly under canvas, were ordered into barracks. As there was not sufficient accommodation in the Government buildings for the unusually large force stationed in Poland, it was determined to quarter some of the men in the monasteries, which, in Warsaw especially, are very numerous and of enormous dimensions.

On the evening of the very first day that troops had been placed in the different convents in Warsaw, I went to see in what manner they were lodged, and if their behaviour was as orderly and quiet as it ought to be within the walls of an edifice dedicated to the worship

of God. I found that the soldiers had been invariably quartered in the cells, refectories, and dormitories on the ground floor, or in a detached wing, whilst the upper stories were entirely left to the members of the religious orders residing in the convent. I observed that there was a strong guard at the principal gates, and that sentries were posted at short intervals round the building.

Up to this time, the monasteries and convents in Warsaw had not been visited by the Russian police, and their precincts were, by order of the Viceroy, to be considered as sacred, and the inmates were not in any way to be interfered with, lest the Poles should be shocked in their religious prejudices. The consequence was, that as far as the Russian Government was concerned, these edifices, and all that took place therein, were enveloped in an impenetrable veil of mystery.

The indications that the coming winter promised to be one of unusual severity produced an increased anxiety in the mind of Count de Berg for the comfort of the troops,

and he determined to follow the example given him by the Sovereign Pontiff himself, and quarter the soldiers who were without barracks in the unoccupied portions of the monasteries.

In Rome the French troops are quartered in the religious establishments, and many of the officers are lodged even in the churches, where apartments were fitted up for them, as at Santa Maria Maggiore.

Scarcely had the Russian soldiers taken up their residence in the monasteries of Warsaw, than the press of Western Europe teemed with the most harrowing details of the atrocities committed by them in the churches, monasteries, and convents in Poland. The frightful sacrilege, the impious crimes of lust and plunder, the robbery of sacred vessels, the desecration of graves amidst the wild blasphemous ravings of a drunken soldiery, which history attributes to the French army in Spain, were scarcely to be compared to the crimes said by some organs of the press to have been perpetuated by Russians in the churches and monasteries of Warsaw. No wonder that a

shudder of horror ran through the civilized world when such events were told with graphic minuteness by some of the leading newspapers in Europe.

When these terrible recitals were sent to me, to inquire into their truth, I was perfectly bewildered. There, in great London journals, and in excellent English, were all the minute details of the most astounding horrors said to have occurred under my own eyes.

I hurried off at once to the places where these sacrilegious crimes were said to have occurred. I was not accompanied by Russian aides-de-camp, or by Government officials, but by two Polish gentlemen, both ardent lovers of their country, and who had abetted with money and influence the insurrection at its outbreak. We questioned everybody who could give us the slightest information on the subject, and I found, to my great relief, that those terrible recitals, which had so startled Europe, were pure fabrications.

Some of the clergymen, inmates of the monasteries where these horrors were said to

have occurred, were evidently grieved to see that their unhappy country must bear the stain of such unblushing falsehoods. Three of these clergymen drew up in writing a solemn protest against the statements in the press of the sacrilegious conduct of the Russian soldiers, against whom, on the contrary, they asserted that they had no cause of complaint. They signed this paper in the evening, and on the following morning all three were found, in their cells, apparently at the point of death. The best medical aid was promptly called in, and two of the sufferers were saved, but the third died in great agony.

These were anointed priests, ministers in the Church of Christ, exhorting by word and example, according to the commands of their Divine Master, to a love of truth and brotherly union. But their sacred calling was no protection to them in the eyes of the "National Government," by whom, for having signed the document mentioned above, they were condemned to death.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE CATHOLIC PRIESTHOOD AND THE POIGNARD.

As stated in the preceding chapter, the monasteries and convents were, under the rule of the Grand Duke, considered as sacred edifices, devoted to the worship of God. The police, therefore, had orders never to enter their precincts for the purpose of making a perquisition, or in any way to interfere with the personal freedom of the inmates. The consequence was, that these places became sanctuaries for the agents of the "National Government," who, safe from the eyes of the police in these "deep solitudes and awful cells," carried on the direction of assassination, of forced contributions, and of correspondence with the

heads of the insurgent bands, and with the chiefs of the movement in London and Paris.

Shortly, however, after the soldiers were quartered in these religious houses, discoveries of the most extraordinary nature were gradually made by the Russian police. Daggers for arming the assassins were found buried in the gardens ; arms and uniforms for the insurgent bands were hid away in the cells, together with all the materials for printing incendiary proclamations, flying sheets of news, and pamphlets. Finding daggers for the assassins hidden within the walls of the monasteries, coupled with some other circumstances, led many to suppose that the Catholic clergy in Poland approved of assassination. It was believed at the time, from the assertions made by some of "the hanging gendarmerie" who had been captured, that their poignards were blessed by the priests before going to perform their work of blood. I cannot believe in so frightful an accusation as that the anointed priests of a Christian Church could be abettors of murder. I am rather inclined to think

that the idea was propagated by the revolutionary committees in London and Paris, for the purpose of leading ignorant Catholics to suppose that, in the cause of "oppressed nationalities," the Church of Rome did permit assassination.

It was certainly a most deplorable circumstance that at the very time assassinations of the most horrible kind were rife in Poland, a solemn mass should have been offered up in the Eternal City, asking the aid of Heaven for the Poles, and that the avowed representative of the "National Government" was, in his official capacity, invited to be present at the ceremony.

I can, however, positively state, from my own personal knowledge, that many of the Catholic priests in Warsaw stood as much in awe of the assassins of the National Government as any simple layman.

When the astounding fabrications were circulated by the press of Western Europe, of the sacrilegious conduct of the Russian soldiers in the religious houses in Warsaw, there

were other Catholic priests besides the three mentioned in the preceding chapter who drew up and signed a document in which it was stated that the allegations made against the troops were utterly false. The document was already in my hands, when I was earnestly implored to restore it to the writers ; for the priests said, if were it to become known to the "National Government" that they had dared to tell the truth in such a case, they were sure to be either poisoned or poignarded.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

GENERAL TREPOFF.

SHORTLY after the appointment of Count de Berg as Viceroy of Poland, it was determined to place an officer of rank at the head of the gendarmerie of the kingdom. General Trepoff was accordingly named by the Emperor to that important post. At the time of his nomination he was living quietly with his wife and numerous family of young children. He was possessed of an independent fortune ; he was no longer young, and had earned honours and rank by long years of arduous service. Had he consulted his own inclinations, he would have passed the remainder of his days in unobtrusive retirement, devoting himself to his domestic cares, to the education of his chil-

dren, and to watching over the failing health of his wife. But he was a soldier, and at the call of duty he determined to repair at once to the post to which he had been named.

The frightful assassinations which were of daily occurrence in Warsaw had filled with horror the public mind in Russia, and the husband and father who had repaired to that ill-fated city, upon which seemed to have fallen the curse of Heaven, had to go through a heart-breaking parting from those he was forced to leave behind.

I met General Trepoff at dinner at the Viceroy's table, on the day of his arrival in Warsaw. That evening we spoke long and intimately, and I was happy to think that a man so humane and upright, and so free from prejudice, should have been chosen to fill a post in which so much could be done in the cause of Christian pity.

So great was the affection existing between General Trepoff and his wife, that the latter could not bear the pain of separation ; and the doctors, fearing for the result in one so delicate,

at length consented that she should undertake the long and weary journey which was to bring her to her husband.

Attended by her eldest daughter, a child of fourteen, and a waiting-maid, she started on her way, and after a fortnight's travelling reached Warsaw.

The joy of meeting between husband and wife was not, however, of long duration. The dark stories which had reached her in her retirement of the stealthy murders and mysterious deaths of which Warsaw was the scene fell short, she soon learned to know, of the terrible reality. Her love exaggerated the perils which her husband ran in a city swarming with assassins, and her anxiety for his safety, joined to the fatigues of her long journey, were too much for her feeble health, and she died. Her last words were a prayer to Heaven to watch over her husband and her child in that place of terrors.

I will not attempt to describe the grief of the widower and of his little girl, or the pity that all who had hearts felt for their sufferings.

General Trepoff is a pious man, and in the church where the dead body of his wife was laid during the solemn funereal rites, he asked that prayers should be offered up each day for the repose of her soul.

From that sad day, every morning the sorrowing widower, with his little girl, in her mourning dress, walked from the Palais Brühl, where they lived, to the church, and kneeling humbly on the steps of the altar, they joined the officiating priest in prayers for her they had lost.

Thus day after day they went and came on their mournful mission, till the "National Government" heard that a Russian general walked slowly each morning in the streets of Warsaw, so absorbed in grief for the death of his wife that he took no heed of what was going on around, and that he had no companion but his little daughter. The National Government thought it too good an occasion to lose, and they ordered that General Trepoff should be assassinated when on his way to church.

Possibly the men of blood who direct these crimes chuckled that night, in their safe retreats in Paris and London, at the thought that with one blow they would kill the father and break the daughter's heart.

One morning, bowed down with sorrow his eyes fixed upon the ground, the General walked slowly from the church where he had been praying towards his home, with his little daughter clinging to his arm. Swiftly and noiselessly the assassins glided behind them—one seized the child—and another, lifting an axe sharp as a razor, aimed a blow at the old man's head.

But Heaven had heard the dying prayer of his wife; the axe turned slightly in the hand of the murderer, and instead of cleaving the head of the General, it cut his ear and wounded him in the shoulder.

Though stunned by the blow, he turned quick as lightning upon his assailant; and seizing him by the throat, he wrenched the hatchet from his grasp, and held him till some Russian soldiers ran to his assistance. He

then turned to his little daughter, who was lying senseless on the ground, and taking her in his arms he carried her to the nearest shop, where she soon recovered sufficiently to be able to continue her way home. The assassin by whom she had been seized, seeing that the blow struck at the General had failed, had dashed her to the ground and fled.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A MOTHER'S PRAYERS.

EVERY day during my stay in Lithuania and in the kingdom of Poland, I tried, with all the very limited means within my power, to stop the effusion of blood, and to save from the severities of the law the unhappy beings who had taken part in the insurrection and fallen into the power of the Russian authorities.

If facts, drawn from the highest and most reliable sources, could have given additional weight to my words, then powerful I should have been for the attainment of my object. But I met with opposition in places where it was least of all to be expected. The opposition did not come from the Russians or from the Poles, but from persons who, like myself,

were strangers in the country, and who, having committed themselves to certain views, were determined to support these views at any cost rather than submit to what they considered the humiliation of abandoning their error. Such an attitude would, under ordinary circumstances, have been of little consequence, but here it tended to perpetuate and increase the horrors of civil war. To attempt entering into communication with the Poles through such a medium was of course hopeless, and that everything would be done to prejudice the Poles against me was quite natural to expect. The attempt to prejudice the natives against me succeeded to admiration, and for some days after my arrival in Warsaw I found myself as isolated with regard to Polish society as if I had taken up my abode in Novogorod.

As the sole object of my mission was one of humanity, my first duty was naturally to visit the prisons and hospitals.

In one of the rooms of the citadel which I entered on the day of my first visit, was con-

fined as a prisoner a young gentleman named Blumer.

In answer to my usual questions, he answered frankly that he had nothing to complain of with regard to his treatment ; that the food given him was wholesome and abundant ; that he had books to read, which he showed me ; and that his bed was good and his room clean and airy.

I asked him if I could serve him in any way. He said there was only one thing he desired in the world, and that was that he should be permitted to see and converse with his mother. "She is old," he said, "and I am her only child, and I know that the thought that I am in prison will break her heart ; for she will think that I am perhaps in a dungeon and treated cruelly. I only ask to see her and to assure her that I am well. For myself I do not care ; I am resigned to my fate ; but the thought that my poor mother suffers on my account almost drives me mad."

His eyes were filled with tears as he spoke. I was greatly touched by that filial

love which was stronger than all thoughts of self.

An hour later I told this young gentleman's story to Count de Berg. The Count was as much affected as I had been, and he promised that my prayer should be granted.

The old lady went to the citadel, was admitted, and weeping she embraced her son. They were happy tears, for mother and son left the prison together and returned to their home.

This young gentleman called on me, in company with others of his countrymen whose acquaintance I had made in the citadel, and who then, like him, were free.

These were my first Polish friends in Warsaw, but I gradually came to know others ; and as time wore on, and they saw that all I told them came out true, they shut their ears to those counsels which could only lead to ruin.

Many a Polish mother promised to remember me in her prayers, and I had then, as I shall ever have, a humble faith that such prayers are acceptable to heaven.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE CARBONARI.

DEATH by the poignard of the assassin and by poison, and where the poignard and the poison could not reach by defamation of character by cunningly fabricated lies, and the ruin of opponents compassed by subtle intrigue, are vices which we have all from our childhood learned to look upon as peculiar to the Italian soil. How our young bloods grew chill as we devoured the novel from the Minerva Press which described so graphically some terrible tale of Italian villany, and with what breathless interest we watched from our place in a crammed theatre the sanguinary career of the bravo with his corked eyebrows and his hoarse voice.

In the hurry and bustle of after-life, these

first impressions of childhood wear gradually away, holding the same dim place in the memory with our old nurse's fairy tales, and would be blotted out altogether were we not startled from time to time by revelations coming to us from beyond the Alps more dark and horrible than any romance-writer or dramatist had imagined.

How strange that a land so favoured by nature, with lovely and varied scenes, with genial skies, a teeming soil, and possessing more of the graceful and the beautiful in art than all the rest of the world besides, should be doomed to suffer by the hands of her own children !

After the fall of Murat, and the establishment of peace throughout Europe, Sir Richard Church, with the consent of the British Government, went to Naples to organize the army of the restored King of the Two Sicilies. The stronghold of the Carbonari at that time was in the province of Apulia, where they committed the most frightful atrocities under the name of patriotism.

The King appointed General Church his Alter Ego. He endowed him with despotic and irresponsible power, and his mission was to extirpate the Carbonari and restore order to that part of the fair kingdom of Naples.

Nothing could surpass the terror which Sir Richard Church found that the assassins of the Carbonari had established amongst all classes in Apulia. No one was safe from the dagger or the poison, the instruments of death mainly employed by these ardent patriots. Sir Richard, who has often spoken to me on the subject, showed me many of the documents, emanating from this secret society, which had fallen into his hands.

The sentences of death issued by this "National Government" against individuals were signed with blood, and their proclamations and edicts were surmounted by devices of an inverted mitre, an inverted cross, and an inverted crown.

Were Sir Richard Church to publish his memoirs of this period of his life, they would

reveal some terrible features in the secret political societies of Italy.

The English general restored order in the province, and amidst the blessings of the entire population returned to Naples to receive the praises of the King and the approval of his own Government.

Though the Carbonari for a time seemed to have disappeared, the principles of their organization still lived.

The doctrine that murder and falsehood are virtues when they are employed in the name of liberty, cannot be propagated with impunity amongst a people. Such instruments cannot be thrown away at will and then forgotten. The nation is familiarised with blood, and crime and virtue are confounded together in the popular mind. The assassin who has been paid to strike in the name of freedom will not hesitate to murder in any other cause for a like recompense. The ex-carbonaro was in his hours of leisure a bravo or a bandit, till the sacred cause of liberty should again require his services.

He had not long to wait, for under new and abler chiefs, and under another name, the political assassin began to ply his dreadful trade in Italy.

Victor Hugo makes Marie Tudor to say, "Mon père me disait toujours qu'on ne retirait jamais autre chose de la bouche d'un Italien qu'un mensonge ni autre chose de sa poche qu'un poignard."

I had lived in Italy, and have known amongst Italians some of the noblest and purest of human beings. I have met with many who commanded the respect of all with whom they came into contact, by the stern rectitude of their sentiments and by their pure and spotless lives. And that I believe to be the character of the great majority of the Italian nation. It is for these, then, to show that they are jealous of the fair fame of their country, and that they protest against the name of Italy being associated with the vilest and most atrocious crimes.

Amidst all the nations of Christendom, Italy stood alone with that dark blot upon her name ;

but now she has a rival in her bad eminence, and that rival is Poland. But assassination and falsehood are not natural to the country of John Sobieski; they have been brought thither from the land of Borgia and Machiavelli.

CHAPTER XL.

SENTENCED TO DEATH.

ONE evening General Trepoff, who had now been appointed Minister of Police, spoke to me in the following terms :—

“ When you first came here, in contradiction to what was asserted by others, you told the Poles that they had no material assistance to expect from England, and that France could not act without the concurrence of the British Government. Your words were said to be false. But as time went on and neither England nor France sent the expected aid, the Poles began to think that it was you that had spoken the truth, and not their *soi-disant* friends. Then, when a telegram arrived, announcing that the Emperor Napoleon had

proposed a Congress to settle the affairs of Poland, it was shown triumphantly about Warsaw, but you on that very day told every Pole that you met that they must not do anything rash, or allow themselves to be buoyed up with false hopes, because that England would never consent to such a Congress, and that consequently it could not possibly take place.

“When events showed that all that you had said was correct, the Poles would no longer listen to those who had deceived them by false promises, and who had done nothing but lead them deeper and deeper into trouble. In you, however, they have now implicit confidence.

“The ‘National Government’ was so displeased at all this, that they sent an order here that you should be assassinated. Fortunately, one of the men designated to murder you revealed the circumstance to us, and I at once took every precaution for your safety.

“I did not intend to shock you by communicating to you so horrible a circumstance, but fearing that you might not keep sufficiently

out of the way of danger, I thought it better to put you on your guard.

“I know that you often sup at the Hôtel d’Angleterre, and as you run great risk in so doing, I have ordered additional sentries to be posted near there, and I have also ordered some policemen in plain clothes and well armed to be stationed in the interior of the house.”

From thenceforth I never went out after sunset, unless accompanied by an armed policeman.

CHAPTER XLI.

TORTURE AT WARSAW.

As I have already observed, I visited Warsaw filled with sympathy for the Poles, and disposed to view their rulers with no friendly eye. So strongly had I prejudged their case, that I must confess that facts had largely accumulated within the sphere of my observation before I ventured to draw a conclusion. I associated with Polish families of high social rank, and I found them more afraid of the secret agents of the National Government than of Russian officials. I have met in society Polish ladies whose names I had seen figuring in the columns of newspapers as martyrs in the cause of national freedom—ladies, some of whom were described as having been outraged and

tortured ; others, who were said to have been insulted for wearing mourning, or made the victims of some other atrocity. At the early period of my acquaintance with these ladies, I felt a kind of shame-faced awe in their presence. Whatever honour they may deserve as martyrs in the cause of their country, it was impossible not to feel that, as women, they had suffered in their social relations. This impression weighed so heavily on my mind that I could never feel or act towards these ladies as I should have done had they not attained so painful a notoriety. It seemed as though they ought not to appear in public, as though they ought to shut themselves up and shun a stranger's gaze. I had been some months at Warsaw, when, having dined one day at the house of a Polish nobleman, where a large company was assembled, I, in the course of the evening, said something to Count Gurondsky about the tortures and insults to which some had been subjected. The Count looked astonished, and assured me that the histories I was narrating would sound very

strangely in the ears of the ladies whom I named, nor would their families be pleased to learn the notoriety that their wives and sisters and daughters had acquired. I was able to adduce certain European journals as my authority. The Count opposed his personal knowledge. The next morning I received the following note :—

“ MONSIEUR,

“ After you left us yesterday evening, I went round amongst the ladies of my acquaintance, and I was unanimously assured, that neither during the time that they wore mourning, nor since they left it off, have they been arrested or insulted by the police or soldiers.

“ Accept, Monsieur, the assurance of my distinguished sentiments,

“ N. GURONDSKY.”

The subject of female martyrdom being once broached, I had no longer any difficulty in speaking on the subject. The indignation of the ladies to whom I talked of these mat-

ters was always vehement. I remember on one occasion how a number of them railed against Mirochawlski and the red republicans, and said that these men and their agents dared to trade in the names of respectable persons, and outrage them by falsehoods inserted in foreign journals, whilst the truth was, that they were living in hourly terror lest some member of their family might meet his death at the hands of the national gendarmerie.

Whilst the agents of the National Government were lawlessly striking down with a dagger, or suspending on the gibbet, those who, having discovered their error, wished to withdraw from all association with the insurgents, or those who refused to pay the imposts levied in the name of the "National Government," they were not less zealous in propagating reports of the cruelty of the Russians, who, it was commonly believed in France and England, tortured their prisoners. The horrors of civil war and the reprisals it entails are quite terrible enough in themselves, and need no artificial darkening. Wishing to know the exact

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truth, I made inquiries in quarters where I was most likely to learn it, and the following letter is one of the many assurances I received that the charge of torture made against the Russian Government is a fabrication. The writer was confined in the citadel at Warsaw, and in the same room with Count Zamoyiski. Both said they were well treated during their captivity, and, were it otherwise, the writer of the following letter, with whose family I was intimate, would certainly have told me so in confidence. He writes frankly :—

“MONSIEUR,

“You have done me so many acts of kindness, that I am sure you will be glad to learn that I was set at liberty yesterday. I know that it is to you I am indebted for my freedom. Allow me to offer you again my sincere thanks.

“During the four weeks that I was detained in the citadel and at Pavia Street, not only had I no cause to complain of the treatment I and my companions received, but on the contrary, I must say, we experienced all the considera-

tion compatible with imprisonment. Nor have I ever heard that anybody whomsoever has been subjected to torture.

“As everything depends on His Excellency the Count de Berg, allow me, Sir, through you, to thank him for the benevolence and clemency he has exhibited in my regard.

“Accept, Monsieur, the assurance of the profound respect of

“Your very humble servant,

“VINCENT PRADRYNSKI.”

Were I not convinced that the worst period of the Polish Revolution is passed, and that the National Government and the hanging gendarmerie will soon cease to be, I would not venture to introduce Pradrynski's name into these pages. It would have been to expose him to the action of the dagger or the gallows. He would have been marked as a renegade; when in truth he was only one of the many Polish gentlemen who mistook the qualities of the instruments with which they hoped to realize their fondest dreams.

CHAPTER XLII.

MANIFESTO OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT.

THE designs of the National Government, and their mode of putting them into execution, may be deduced from one of their manifestos, of which the following is a copy :—

“The National Government,

“Taking into consideration that the executive authorities of the invasion condemn to death, without a legal trial, the members of the national organization arrested by them—for the commissions of inquiry, and the courts-martial, which outrage all notions of right, cannot be looked on as legal tribunals—the National Government, in order effectually to defend the safety of the members of the national organization, have, acting upon the suggestion

of the heads of the police department, decreed as follows :—

“1st. That the commissions of inquiry, established to examine into so-called political crimes, the courts-martial, the gendarmerie employed in political inquiries and in espionage, the military heads of governments, districts, and departments, as well as their civil assistants, the executive police at Warsaw, with the exception of the administrative sections, are all excluded from the protection of the law.

“2d. The execution of the present decree is confided to the civil and military authorities.

“Decreed at the sitting of the National Government.

“Warsaw, 25th August, 1863.”

This edict of the National Government, to which the official seal is attached, is a condensation of their policy, which, in fact, may be expressed in one word—“dagger.” That Italian weapon has become the symbol of the Polish

insurrection, and plainly reveals its origin and the character of its organizers. The Polish nobles who at first took part in the movement were, I repeat, deceived. They believed that their cherished dream of Polish independence was about to be realized, and when they discovered their error, they found that they had not alone compromised themselves with the Russian Government, but had given themselves over to the power of men to whom the interests of Poland were nothing, but who found in the chronic restlessness of the Poles, and in their high susceptibility, those elements which, properly fermented, might produce in Poland a result similar to that which had already been obtained in Italy. Besides, amongst the Polish nobility there were men of great wealth, who were only too happy to place their riches at the disposal of those who undertook to carry out all the details of the insurrection, and put the revolution-making machinery into operation. The Poles were bade to look at Italy. They could see there what had been done in the cause of freedom by the "moral aid" of

England and the material assistance of France. Their country, too, should be freed, and should again become a nation.

A fact not to be lost sight of is, that the national gendarmerie were for the most part foreigners. Prince Emile Willgenstein says, that in his Government they were mostly Prussians. What conclusion can we draw from this? It is not to be supposed that these men volunteered to hang and stab, and were willing to expose themselves to the consequent risk, without what is called a "handsome consideration." The plain truth is, these men were hired assassins, and the subscriptions of numbers of honest-minded people in England and France helped to furnish their pay.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE PRESS.

BUT for the press, the National Government of Poland would have been little known to the rest of Europe, and silence would have been fatal to the interests of the revolution-makers. It was necessary that their views should be propagated throughout Europe, and it was equally necessary that they should supply the source whence such information was to circulate. Opinion is, in the present day, under certain conditions, as powerful as the sword; it is the "moral aid" of which so much has of late been said, and the press is the exponent of opinion. Amongst belligerents, therefore, the party that secures the advocacy of the press receives that moral aid which, in the

eyes of the majority, throws a halo of justification round its proceedings. This advocacy, the National Government was able to secure, and the "foreign correspondence" of English and French journals often served the cause of the revolutionists abroad as much as the dagger did at home.

Men of great talent, members of some secret society, often sent a "correspondence" to some journal of Western Europe, detailing events often wholly fabricated, or so highly coloured, as to be scarcely recognisable by those who knew the truth. Whether the newspaper correspondent was the framer of the intelligence, or whether the information was furnished by others upon whose word he relied, but who practised on his credulity and prejudices, I cannot take upon me to say; but this I can confidently affirm, that whilst staying in Poland, I have read "foreign correspondence" in English and French papers, purporting to narrate circumstances said to have occurred in the town where I was residing, and of these narrations, I must say

that they were baseless as an air-vision. A popular horror once set afloat circulates rapidly; it is not always easy to discover the source; and many journals copied in good faith tales of Russian barbarity that had no other foundation than the author's imagination. It was in this way that some of the leading journals of Europe unwittingly misled their readers.

Everybody must remember the sensation produced by Mr. Grant Duff's letter, published in the *Times* of the 14th of last January. That gentleman had gone to Wilna and to Warsaw. He had seen and judged for himself. He visited the prisons and the hospitals; he found the inmates properly cared for: there was no want of food or of rational recreation; there were no traces of torture. "I am happy to say," says Mr. Grant Duff, "that the impression left upon my mind, by a visit to these establishments, is one highly favourable to the humanity of the Russian Government."

The *Times*—the great organ of public

opinion—published Mr. Grant Duff's letter, and the English public for the first time heard at least a portion of the truth with regard to the Russo-Polish question. I must say that my experience coincides with that of Mr. Grant Duff. Public opinion, led by the press, may yet experience a reaction. What has been exalted may be condemned, and even-handed justice declare the truth.

The part that many honest and independent journals have had in misrepresenting the real facts of the Polish insurrection is much to be deplored ; but if, instead of trusting to "foreign correspondents," some of the proprietors or editors of these journals had themselves travelled into Poland, public opinion in England would long since have taken a different tone. The doubly-deceived Polish nobles who took part in the insurrection would have had their eyes opened, and the real promoters of the insurrection would have been unmasked.

No one honours the press more than I. It is not alone one of our greatest institutions, but it is in itself the concentrated expression

of the power of our other great constitutional bulwarks, of which we may say that it is at the same time the offspring and the crowning defence. It is in England that the press realizes our ideal of freedom of thought and speech. In other countries, the press is only an exotic—a slip, so to speak, of our English plant—and away from its native soil it does not grow healthily. Under the too careful supervision of a more Southern clime, it loses its hardy vigour; in the colder North, it dies for want of sustenance; and amongst our Transatlantic brethren, the once hardy plant, imbibing the rankness of the soil, degenerates into a noxious weed. The press of England is not alone the organ of British nationality; it has become the voice of the universe, and is equally ready to uphold an oppressed nationality against a crowned despot, or to inquire into the conduct of a workhouse official who refuses relief, or doles it out ungraciously, to a craving mendicant. The press is a faith with the British nation. The English are a hard-working, commercial people. The Eng-

lishman rises in the morning, and recommences his daily pursuits as merchant, banker, or tradesman, and during the intervals of business, or at the close of the day, he reads his favourite journal and he believes. His belief is more in the honesty of the journalist than in the truth of what he reads; for whilst he peruses a "leading article," or the letter of a foreign correspondent, he retains the secret though perhaps unacknowledged conviction, that should what he reads contain an erroneous statement, it will certainly, upon discovery, be corrected. The Englishman regards the national press as a free-spoken, fearless spirit always ready to declare the unvarnished truth, ever ready to point out a grievance, especially where the mighty seek to oppress the weak. Never does an Englishman feel so satisfied that the great organs of public opinion are doing their duty as when they attack some foreign potentate, or plead for some struggling nationality. It is one of our popular weaknesses. It is a remnant of an old creed that taught the Englishman that everything conti-

mental was bad. In this, as in other cases, if we wish to ascertain the truth, we must see with our own eyes, or else rectify our opinions by the testimony of credible witnesses.

CHAPTER XLIV.

FOREIGN JOURNALS.

I do not write in the interest of any party ; I merely state what I have seen ; and I am very sure that were a few gentlemen, as liberal and as unprejudiced as Mr. Grant Duff, to go to Wilna and to Warsaw, their impressions would coincide with his and mine. It is most important to the Poles that the English people should learn the truth, and it is very certain that they cannot learn it from foreign journals. I have seen documents proving that an offer had been made to the Russian Government by a certain continental journal, to advocate the Russian cause upon arranged conditions. It was there stated that the National Committee had offered 150,000 francs to secure the like ser-

vices. The Russian Government refused, and the journal became one of the most important advocates of the insurrection.

The National Government had its own official organ at Cracow, and the fabricated accounts that appeared in its columns of outrages, floggings, and tortures, were copied in good faith by many newspapers on the Continent and in England. Illustrated journals gave engravings representing battles gained by the Poles over the Russians, battles which had never taken place, but these representations had the effect of raising still higher the enthusiasm of the Philo-Poles of England and France, who were far from suspecting the truth.

Falsehoods of this nature must ultimately harm even the most righteous cause, but false reports propagated through the press are part of the system introduced into Poland. It has been, and is still, employed with a certain effect, and for a time misled, not alone the public of Western Europe, but even the Governments of England and France.

I am far from pretending to assert that painful and distressing scenes did not occur in Poland, or that the Russian Government did not strictly enforce military law ; I only assert that the stories of torture, flogging of women, and such like atrocities, were not practised. It was painful to see young lads—schoolboys as many of the insurgents were—lying wounded in the hospitals, or immured in the prisons. I have often, moved by a mother's tears, pleaded for some such foolish lad, and have frequently succeeded in obtaining my request. Count de Berg once said to me, "No one can regret more than I being obliged to punish. But what would you have me do ? The laws must be enforced ; order must be maintained. I am only the exponent of the law."

Those writers who advocated in foreign journals the general principles of revolution were unquestionably men of great talent, and understood perfectly well how to colour the events they described according to the opinions of the persons by whom they were to be read. For Catholic Rome, Liberal France, and Protestant

England, the story was painted to suit the occasion. At Rome it was believed ; and through Rome, the inhabitants of the Faubourg St. Germain, and the Catholics of England and Ireland, believed that the Poles were persecuted on account of their religion, that the seclusion of convents was violated, priests and nuns tortured and outraged, churches desecrated, and the rites of religion forbidden to be administered. To the free-thinking public of France and the Protestant people of England, the insurrection was described as the heroic struggle of a people galled by a hateful yoke, anxious for constitutional freedom and enlightened institutions. To all the appeal was made, in the name of philanthropy, of charity, and humanity. It is, perhaps, creditable to human nature that such pleas are everywhere listened to. The Catholic and the Protestant heart alike responded to the call. The Pope fell into the snare in which he had been before entangled. Sums of money were contributed by the fine ladies of the Faubourg St. Germain and by gentle Englishwomen, for

on this point they were united ; pity made them akin ; and the Catholic clergy in these islands, and chiefly in Ireland, expressed the profoundest sympathy with the insurgents. It did not seem to strike these gentlemen at the time as an ominous fact, that the most active coadjutor in the cause was Gavazzi.

The apostles of revolution understood well how to practise on the passions and prejudices of the masses ; they knew even how to make the best feelings of communities subservient to their designs. In Poland, assassination was done in the name of Catholicity ; in Italy, it was anti-papal ; and yet neither the partizans of the Poles nor the partizans of the Italians seemed to perceive that it was the same spirit that directed the secret committees in both countries. The ultramontane party in France and England supported, in the press and in the senate, the " National Government " of Poland, which was based upon the most atrocious system of assassination the world had ever seen, whilst they denounced the same system when carried into operation against

papal Rome. The Duke of Florence prayed Heaven to save him from his friends. The Catholic Church in these islands may well offer up the like petition. Her friends did her questionable service whilst they upheld as "Catholic" the Polish National Government, whose agents accomplish their mission by means of the dagger.

CHAPTER XLV.

POLAND AND ITALY.

ITALY, the birthplace of the cosmopolitan revolutionists, was the country where they first had an opportunity of carrying their principles into operation. Some seventeen or eighteen years ago that extraordinary movement commenced in Rome whose oscillations have since been felt throughout Italy. At first, reforms were talked of, the most philanthropic sentiments found utterance, and a profound respect for the Pope and religion was expressed. Pious IX., philanthropic and confiding, was pleased at the prospect held out, and thinking to do his people much good, he not only joined the movement, but put himself at its head. Gradually the revolutionists extended

their toils ; little by little, as in Poland, they rose in influence, until at last their true objects became revealed. The Pope, alarmed, tried, when he learned the truth, to draw back ; but it was too late. The evil had taken root, and Rossi, the Pope's minister, was stabbed on the staircase of the pontifical palace. Whether the dagger-thrust was a means taken to silence a too vigilant observer, or whether the servant was slain as a warning to the master, it matters not now to inquire. The Pope saw that the demon of revolution was unchained, and fled in terror to Gaeta, and the Eternal City was abandoned to the revolutionists.

The revolutionary movement in Rome was not an outburst against the Catholic religion, as many persons supposed ; it was a demonstration against authority of every kind, more especially that represented by crowned heads. That it was so considered by the Sovereigns of Europe was manifest from the manner in which they behaved to the Pope. The Queen of England wrote a letter of condolence to the Sovereign Pontiff ; the Emperor of Russia, the

head of the Orthodox Greek Church, did the like ; nor was the King of Prussia wanting in expressions of sympathy. It was very evident that the sovereigns did not view the disturbances in Rome as a heterodox manifestation of disaffection to a particular form of religion ; they saw in the subversion of the Pope's authority the operations of a spirit which, in that instance successful against a weak sovereign, might on a future occasion be sufficiently strong to shake the stability of more powerful thrones. Louis Napoleon, then President of the Republic, took a bolder step. He ordered his legions to Rome, and French bayonets have since formed a rampart round the papal throne.

Anybody who attentively traces the progress of the Polish insurrection will observe a striking similarity between the mode in which it was conducted and that followed by the revolutionists in Italy. The movement began amongst the upper classes ; the National Committee was a hidden power whose symbol was the dagger.

How strangely inconsistent seems the conduct of those men who advocate in Poland what they condemn in Rome ! To judge the conduct of any man or any body of men dispassionately, we must make allowance for the influence of party spirit and national and social prejudices. It is under such influences that the facts of contemporary history are ignored ; and some historian, a few generations later, will win for himself some literary fame by proving to our descendants that we have been alike extravagant in our praise and in our censure. Distance in space acts with regard to our knowledge of events with as obscuring an effect as distance in time. We frequently entertain as erroneous opinions of the conduct and character of our foreign contemporaries and of their surroundings, as of the founders of empires that lived centuries before the Christian era. Our prejudices must become mellowed by age before we can recognise our error. We angelize or demonize our contemporaries. Even Mr. Grant Duff could not name Count de Berg and General Mouravieff

in the House of Commons without exciting a mocking laugh ; but if some of the members of the British Senate had witnessed what I have seen in Warsaw, they would have listened with different feelings to Mr. Grant Duff's statement of the numbers whose lives had been terminated by the dagger or gibbet of the National Gendarmerie.

CHAPTER XLVI.

ACTUAL STATE OF POLAND.

THE following official documents give a clear and correct view of the actual state of Poland. In these pages, a comparison is drawn between the aspect presented by affairs in Poland in the spring of 1863 and the spring of the present year. This comparison is worthy the attentive consideration of the English people. It will be seen there that one of the great incitements to insurrection, and one of the delusive hopes that enabled the Poles to maintain the contest, was the expectation of foreign interference. To hold out hopes that we do not intend to fulfil is a cruel deception. As Count Osten Sacken shrewdly remarks : " The insurrection, left to its own resources, will gradually die out."

What are now the sentiments of the different classes of the Poles with regard to the insurrection? The peasantry, who never revolted, and who, it must be confessed, had no interest in common with their landlords, are becoming every day bolder in resisting the "National Gendarmerie;" bands of villagers, acting as a local police, assist the authorities in bringing these men to justice. The landed proprietors, who now see that all hope of foreign assistance is vain, "have," we are told, "modified their opinions." Nay, more, they "secretly" give information to the Russian authorities, and point out the lurking-places of the brigands. The clergy, too, have yielded to pressure acting from so many points, and withdrawn, with one exception, the symbols of national mourning from the churches. These are indications of peace, though not unaccompanied by certain movements not calculated to raise the actors in our estimation. The secret informer, or the public denunciator, is not a dignified character in the page of history. His trade is one which presents humanity in an

unfavourable point of view, but which the abnormal condition of revolution brings into operation. Count Osten-Sacken says that assassination no longer goes unpunished. This is the best proof that the cosmopolitan revolutionists are losing their hold of Poland.

No. 28, Annex 1.

Warsaw,
17/29 February, 1864.

“ MONSIEUR L'AMBASSADEUR,

“ I profit by the departure of a courier for Berlin, to transmit to your Excellency the annexed notification.

“ It is a plain statement of some considerations about the probable renewal of the intrigues of the Polish revolution during the approaching spring.

“ Your Excellency will deign to observe, in glancing over this document, that I have not ventured in any way to prejudge the result of the present insurrection only in as far as the insurrection should be left to its own resources.

“ This statement is moreover, Monsieur le

Baron, only a logical deduction drawn from a comparison between the general aspect presented by events in Poland at the commencement of 1863, and that which marks the opening of the year upon which we have just entered.

“In making a succinct *résumé* of the data contained in the communications that Mr. Tegoborski and I have had the honour of transmitting to your Excellency, I hoped to bring into stronger relief the actual state of things.

“I have the honour to be, with the most profound consideration, Monsieur l’Ambassadeur,

“Your Excellency’s very humble, and
very obedient servant,

“OSTEN SACKEN.

“To His Excellency Baron Brunnow.”

Annex to No. 23.

Warsaw,

7/19 February, 1864.

“The more nearly the spring draws nigh, the more frequently are we tempted to ask what turn events will take after the disappearance of the cold weather, which had served as a material obstacle to the formation of large bands of insurgents; for if, on the one hand, thanks to the energetic measures of the administration, and to the incessant activity of our columns, the beaten and scattered insurgent bands experience considerable difficulty in rallying in the different suburbs and villages of the kingdom, on the other hand, it becomes impossible for them to rally in the forests on account of the severity of the weather.

“When the winter shall have passed, this latter obstacle will disappear.

“We have every reason to believe that with the return of spring the conspirators will endeavour to reassemble some bands. The small groups of brigands that now make their appearance, sometimes in one locality, some-

times in another, may combine and form nuclei round which will cluster those insurgents who have escaped the vigilance of the local police and the pursuit of our detachments that traverse the country in every direction.

“Already the diminished cold of the month of January has occasioned the concentration of some bands numbering about one hundred men each.

“From information received from many quarters, we foresee fresh incursions from Galicia and Posnania.

“Some of the advices we have received tell us at the same time of increased excesses on the part of the ‘reds’ and of the partizans of Mieroslawski.

“All that we have heard makes it our duty to consider seriously what may be the result of the intrigues which will probably be renewed by the conspirators during the coming spring.

“We shall proceed to reason by comparison.

“It is, in fact, the real difference which exists between the state of things that characterized

the political situation of the spring of 1863 and that which marks the present time, that can serve as a basis for provisions as to future probabilities.

“At the beginning of the year 1863, the insurrection first openly declared itself. The insurrection sprang forth, replete with all the resources of a carefully-prepared organization, and which had not been yet weakened by use. The effect which the system of terrorism introduced by the conspirators exercised over the minds of the population was, for the latter, a new sensation. The mysterious dread of a secret association whose vengeance overtook its victims even in the bosom of their families was experienced with the force that a sentiment wholly new inspires.

“Moreover, the revolutionary enthusiasm at that time existed in its full force, and created a belief in the most improbable results, because it had not yet been brought into contact with realities.

“The agricultural population, who took no part in the movement, were stupified by the

audacity of the insurgents, who committed excesses upon so vast a scale.

“ The nobility still flattered themselves that they would be able to guide the movement.

“ Partly of their own free choice, and partly overruled by others, the nobility were far from foreseeing the evils that awaited them, and the disastrous effects that the ascendancy of the ‘ reds ’ would bring upon them.

“ The defection of the government *employés*, for the most part kept secret, retarded the administration of the laws.

“ The police, consisting almost exclusively of Poles, was not yet reformed, and often afforded impunity to criminals, either through want of activity or through the treason of subalterns.

“ Lastly, foreign intervention put a climax to the difficulties of the situation.

“ The hope of success which this intervention inspired doubled the strength of the insurrection, and induced the majority of the upper and middle classes to make immense sacrifices to prolong the existing confusion, hoping for a

foreign intervention of a definite and decided character.

“Such was the position of affairs in the spring of 1863.

“The characteristics of the present spring are essentially different.

“Disorder still prevails. Small bands of brigands commit revolting excesses in localities where they do not expect to meet the regular troops.

“But the insurrection has been worn out in a struggle that exhausted its means of supply, at the same time that public feeling has experienced sensible modifications, the result of last year's experience.

“In fact, the first outburst of enthusiasm having passed away, all that remained to the insurgents was the hope of foreign assistance, confidence in a system of terrorism, and money.

“The brilliant diplomatic career which the Imperial Cabinet has conducted, with an ability that has won the admiration of its antagonists and the gratitude of the country, has annihili-

lated the malevolent project of the Powers that were combined against us, and crushed that last hope of the Polish revolutionists.

“The majority of those became greatly dispirited who had combined with the promoters of the movement in the hope that foreign intervention would come to the aid of the Poles, and with the unavowed hope, that the question once openly discussed, they would succeed in supplanting the ‘reds,’ for the advantage of their own party.

“Meanwhile, the energetic and sustained measures of the Government had weakened the sense of terror which the secret committee had inspired, and had replaced it by that salutary fear which criminals experience in the face of a strong administration, which will inevitably overtake crime.

“The numerous arrests and banishments which the insurrection has entailed have weakened the influence of the secret committee.

“Dissension amongst the promoters of the insurrection, numerous defections, and the want of pecuniary means, are facts which the

revolutionists regard with alarm, as is proved by many authentic documents that have fallen into our hands.

“The contributions levied upon the different classes that had directly or indirectly favoured the insurrection, as well as the pecuniary fines imposed in special cases upon persons who might have prevented partial crimes, have aroused a portion of the population, and induced them to exercise a surveillance, without which the operations of the Government would have been insufficient. On the other hand, the excesses committed by the insurrectionists during more than a year have turned the greater portion of the population against them.

“Emboldened by the energy displayed by the administration, this sentiment has increased amongst the people, and resolved itself into facts.

“The peasantry look with great satisfaction upon the activity gradually displayed by the Government. Reposing with confidence upon the well-timed operations of the legal authority, they have become themselves more active

and more enterprising against the agents of the revolution.

“The enrolment of village guards, and several local facts, give evidence of the spirit that animates the peasantry.

“The landed proprietors, on their side, have in general considerably modified their opinions.

“Depressed by the conviction of the hopelessness of foreign aid, threatened with the complete destruction of their properties, entailed by the insurrection, great numbers have sought the good graces and support of our authority, whose operations they sometimes secretly aid by private information, and by pointing out on their estates the abode of solitary insurgents, or small bands of brigands.

“The so-called national taxes are very badly paid; for the most part, they are refused.

“Under the pressure of the contributions imposed by the Government, the clergy—this powerful auxiliary of the Polish revolution—have already begun in certain localities to change their tone: the black drapery is removed from all the churches in the kingdom,

with the exception of the archdiocese of Warsaw.

“The numberless denunciations enregistered by the courts-martial prove, on the one hand, the gradual diminution of the influence of the revolutionary terrorism, and, on the other, despair as to the success of the insurrection.

“In short, the efforts of a remodelled and active police are gradually producing results which induce us to augur ultimate success.

“Assassination no longer remains unpunished; the law overtakes the crime and the criminal.

“Such are the results obtained during the past months, and the principal characteristics which mark the situation of affairs now, at the beginning of the year 1864.

“This simple statement justifies us in drawing the following conclusions:—

“Making allowance for unforeseen circumstances which often play so important a part in the history of the events, and in the grave complications that sometimes arise in Europe, we may say, with some degree of confidence,

that the Polish insurrection, left to its own resources and deprived of external assistance, has small prospect of lasting much longer.

“The exhaustion consequent upon a violent struggle is such, that it would be difficult to believe that a factitious reproduction of the insurrectionary movement could be anything more than isolated outbursts arising in certain localities, and of whose repression there could be no doubt.

“The disorganization of the revolutionary association, and the modifications which have taken place in public opinion, are symptoms which do not permit us to doubt that the Polish insurrection will gradually fade away along that descending scale down which it has been gliding during the past months.

“Let it be thoroughly well understood, that the incursions of bands from Galicia and Posnanian must be prevented at any cost.

“The moral influence resulting from the entrance of these bands may be productive of more evil than the excesses by which they might mark their passage.”

No. 33.

Warsaw,

17/29 February, 1864.

“MONSIEUR L'AMBASSADEUR,

“I have but little to add to the general information which I had the honour to transmit to your Excellency in my last communications.

“The reports lately received by the Lieutenant of the Emperor state, that the detachments which incessantly traverse the kingdom rarely meet any insurgent bands.

“Detachments have been sent in various directions in pursuit of fugitives, and already three hundred insurgents have been sent prisoners to Kelce.

“The only meetings of insurgents mentioned in these reports are those which have taken place in the south-eastern part of the government of Radom.

“In fact, the passage of some bands from Galicia has been facilitated by the ice which covered the Vistula. These bands seem to have attracted to their ranks the marauders and vagrants who, in the government of Ra-

dom, had succeeded in escaping the vigilance of our authorities, and who must have found their way singly into the south-eastern part of this government.

“The military arrondissement of Radom is consequently entirely freed of this class of persons.

“As I have already had the honour to inform your Excellency by a telegram this day, a band of insurgents had formed the intention of making a *coup de main* against the town of Opatow.

“Repulsed by our troops, this band was soon put to flight by General Tchiengeri, who having captured their chief—bearing the pseudo-name of Topor—had him hanged in the market-place of the above-named city.

“The re-establishment of order and tranquillity, which I had the honour of notifying to your Excellency in my preceding communications, continues to progress gradually.

“Captain Baron Brunning, who was sent upon official business into the districts of Olkersz and of Miechow, and who has re-

turned this evening to Warsaw, has traversed these districts without an escort.

“Your Excellency is aware that these two districts, situated on the frontiers of Galicia and of the Duchy of Cracow, were, during the period of the insurrection, incessantly infested by bands of insurgents.

“I have the honour to be, with the most profound respect, Monsieur l’Ambassadeur, your Excellency’s

“Very humble and obedient servant,

“OSTEN-SACKEN.”

“To His Excellency Baron Brunnow.”

THE END.



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